

7
LITERATURE, 1896.

SELECTIONS

FROM

WORDSWORTH, COLERIDGE, CAMPBELL
AND LONGFELLOW

EDITED WITH

INTRODUCTION, LITERARY ESTIMATE AND NOTES

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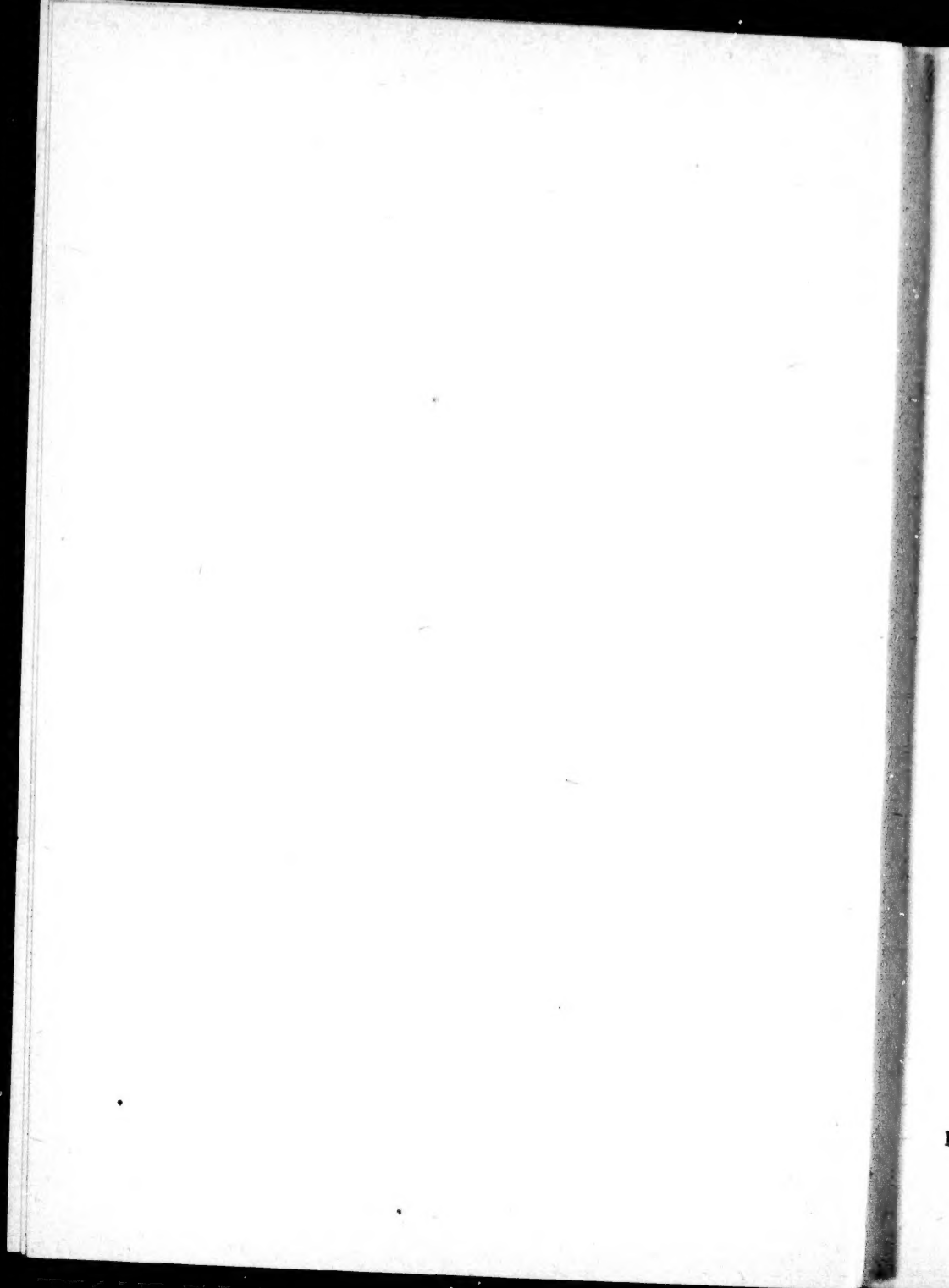
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PREFACE.

Influenced by the modern demand on behalf of students for "no notes" or "few notes," the editors of these Selections have been bold enough to depart, both in the subject-matter and the form of this book, from the orthodox conceptions of a literature text, and to speak to the teachers as well as the students. This is done, however, with no presumptuous fancy that they are able to bring positive value to the teacher, rather with the assurance from personal experiences that they do bring suggestions for profitable modes and lines of work. In the evolutionary development of an author's powers, with its natural corollary, a comparative analysis of his work, is found, they feel, the key-note of modern literary studies.

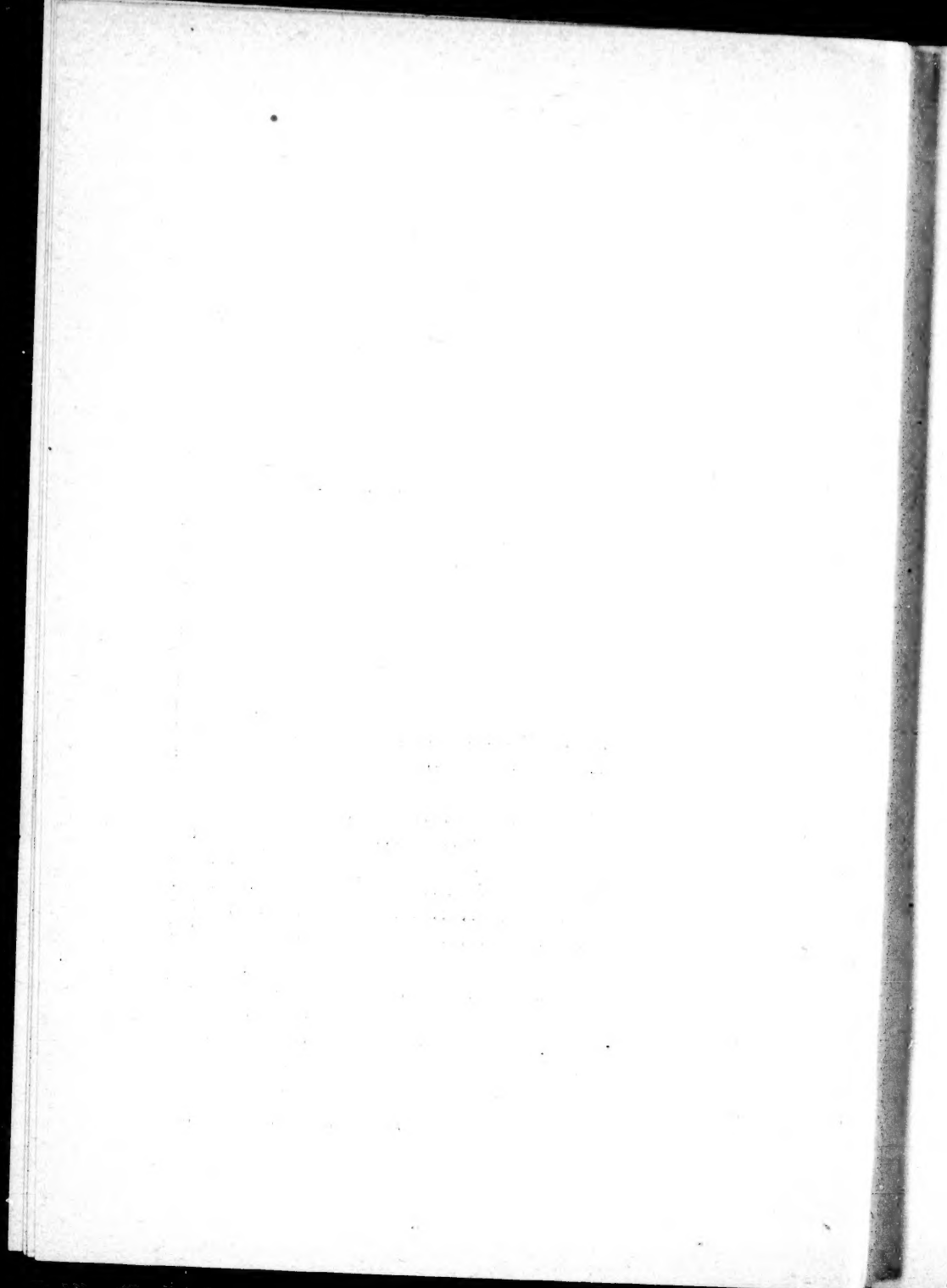
But they must offer apologies not so much for what they planned to do as for what they did. Lack of time—the work was undertaken late in the spring, lack of opportunity—burdens are not foreign to a High School Master's life in May and June, rendered impossible a practical application of the principles of the Introductory Chapter to the study of selected poems, and left somewhat imperfect and incomplete the treatment of Campbell and Longfellow. For the rest, let lack of power speak.

TORONTO, July, 1895.



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THE EVOLUTION OF LITERARY CRITICISM.

Of all forms of intellectual activity the least satisfactory, methodical and scientific is literary criticism. In our new-born zeal for the study of literature there is indeed no lack of utterance on literary matters: estimates of the lives and works of men of letters fill the magazines, while introductions, expositions, critiques and commentaries are poured from the press in endless profusion. But how rarely do we feel that any current criticism has disengaged the stimulus which we are sure the author contains for us, and brought us into immediate contact with genius itself to obtain the incentive, the true and the excellent, which it is the function of a work of genius to impart.

The popular demand for this sort of work is no proof of its scientific method. It is quite possible to write of poets and poetry afresh, to combat received opinions concerning them, and to interest the average intelligent reader in so doing, without the writer's applying or the reader's being called on to comprehend one intelligible canon of criticism. The average reader is like one of George Eliot's characters: " 'What is the truth?' asked Lady Chettam of Mrs. Cadwallader in *Middlemarch*. 'The truth? he is as bad as the wrong physic—nasty to take and sure to disagree.' 'There could not be anything worse than that,' said Lady Chettam with so vivid a conception of the physic that she seemed to have learned something exact about Mr. Casaubon's disadvantages." Give the man just emerging into the intellectual life plenty of effusion tricked out in copious metaphorical drapery like the

following passage from a well-known Shakspearean editor's comment on *King Lear*: "I am not clear whether the inspired antics that sparkle from the surface of his mind are in more impressive contrast with the dark tragic scenes into which they are thrown like rockets into a midnight tempest or with the undercurrent of deep tragic thoughtfulness, out of which they falteringly issue and play"—give the average reader plenty of such figurative criticism and like Lady Chettam he will have such a vivid conception of the figures that nothing in the heavens above, in the earth beneath, or in the waters under the earth will convince him that he is really no wiser than at first, that such verbal delirium will never bring him a step nearer the understanding of a poet or his work.

The defect of current critical writing is its want of scientific method. Critics so voluminously productive must feel the excellence of the authors or works studied, like Andrea Del Sarto's artistic contemporaries, must enter the heaven of poetic interpretation, enter and take their place there sure enough, though they come back and cannot tell the world. And they will never tell the world until they come to some agreement as to the nature of poetry. Edgar Allen Poe, Theodore Watts, Rossetti, Swinburne, and the rest of the æsthetic school define poetry as an appeal to the sensuous love of the beautiful. "I would define in brief the poetry of words," says Poe, "as the rhythmical creation of beauty; its sole arbiter is taste; with the intellect or with the conscience it has only collateral relations; unless incidentally, it has no concern whatever with duty or truth." Many admirers of Milton, although that is not the only characteristic of Milton's genius, make poetry the act of conveying impressively "ideas of worship, praise and supplication." Others, nourished on Dryden and Pope, define poetry as the language of wit and epigram and ratiocination. Emerson, Coleridge and the transcendentalists or romanticists deride ratiocinative poetry,

and strive to limit the term poetry to the employment of sense conceptions as symbols of a deeper spiritual truth perceptible to the imagination only. "The poet discovers," says Emerson, "that what men value as substances have a higher value as symbols, that nature is the immense shadow of man."

In each of these views there is a portion of truth. They are not contradictory but correlative. In the evolution of criticism they have been successively isolated and emphasized, and therefore made to appear too antagonistic, but the higher synthesis in which full justice is done to each contending principle has already been suggested. The development of thought is everywhere the same—first, a vaguely conceived whole; then the analysis of this whole and the emphasizing in succession, even to the point of contradiction, of each of its elements; and finally the synthesizing conception which reconciles the apparent contradictions.

From the Socratic philosophy, for example, came both the idealism of Plato and the materialism of the Cyrenaic school, each isolating, emphasizing and therefore bringing into clearer consciousness one aspect of the master's thought to the exclusion of all the others, and then came the masterly synthesis of Aristotle, in which the warring principles of the various schools found their reconciliation. English criticism has obeyed a similar law. Beginning with Sidney's *Defence of Poesie*, in which all subsequent criticism was contained in germ, English criticism has passed successively through the sensuous, the moral and religious, the ratiocinative and the romantic stages, and now awaits the synthesis which will give these various aspects their due place in a total view of poetry. Taking the flexible intelligence of Greece as the highest all-round development of human nature that the world has seen, and the Hebrew, the Latin and the Gothic minds as relatively partial and imperfect, we may conveniently consider the history of

English criticism under the following heads: Premature Hellenism, Hebraism, Latinism, Romanticism and the Returning Hellenism of Matthew Arnold, Stopford Brooke and other recent criticism.

PREMATURE HELLENISM.

Mediaevalism, the prevalent theory of life prior to the Renaissance, may briefly be described as otherworldliness. It originated as a wholesome reaction against the terrible colossal materialism which, under the Roman Empire, threatened the annihilation of all the intellectual grandeur of mankind. In this Roman world the flesh had become so insolent that Christian discipline was needed to chasten it. After the carnival of sensuality of later Rome there was need of the preaching of the gospel of self-denial, continence, renunciation. But like every other movement, rational and beneficent in its origin, it came to be pursued fanatically and mechanically, and of course was carried to extremes. All flesh was condemned; and not only was the supremacy of spirit over flesh admitted, but the latter was mortified in order to gratify the former. Through the odium cast on the flesh the most innocent gratifications of the senses were accounted sins; and, as it was impossible to be entirely spiritual, the growth of hypocrisy became inevitable; despotic and arbitrary forms of government found their most efficacious support in mediævalism, through its teaching the renunciation of all earthly pleasures and the cultivation of the virtues of abject humility and angelic patience; while its insistence on the complete subordination of reason to faith opposed an almost insuperable barrier to the advancement of science and perpetuated for centuries the reign of ignorant credulity. Assuming an absolute separation between the world of nature and that of spirit as if some lesser god had made the world and had not force to

shape it as he would, or indeed as if Satan himself were the lord of this lower world, mediævalism forbade, as Taine says, "a life of nature and worldly hopes; erected monasticism into the ideal for actual life; and ended by replacing spontaneity or originality, whether of thought or of action, by submission, reducing religious enthusiasm to fixed religious practices, the morality of the heart to outward mechanical discipline, and thinking to a mere mnemonic exercise." Grotesqueness, hideousness and gloom in art, hypocrisy in life, and conduct and credulity in matters of science were the earmarks of mediævalism.

Against all this the great movement of thought and feeling which thrilled the whole of Europe in the 16th century was a protest, and it therefore exhibited in most countries three main phases—æsthetic, religious and intellectual. In England there was a quickening in turn of the national imagination, will and reason corresponding to the influence of Greece, of Judea and of Rome, which were then, through the revived interest in the Bible and in the Greek and Latin classics, beginning to modify English insularity. It would be a mistake, of course, to suppose that the national glow of life and thought which characterized the age of Elizabeth was wholly owing to foreign or external influence. No individual or race can be influenced by another race or individual unless the former have some spiritual kinship with the latter. The abundance and excellence of Anglo-Saxon poetry and prose; the freshness and vigour, the sparkling wit and genial humour of the literature of the transition, of *The Owl and the Nightingale* for example; the abiding power and charm of Chaucer's verse; the ancient and inbred integrity, piety, good nature and good humour of the English people sufficiently prove the native vitality of the race, its imaginative, intellectual and moral kinship, before mediævalism laid the dead hand upon it, with Greece, Rome and Judea at their best. At the

same time when the spirit of a people is finely touched they eagerly go out of themselves to seize upon whatever may sustain the flame of their own glowing life and derive great help from contact with older and more perfect civilizations than their own. Though the English spirit was touched by each of the three great ancient civilizations, it was to the influence of Athens that England first responded, though the other tendencies operated even then as undercurrents and were destined to emerge in turn as the dominating tendencies of the nation.

The Attic or Hellenic genius, as described by Professor Curtius, the famous historian of Greece, was characterized by a love of clear thinking and fearless discussion, a gay social temper, an ease and lightness, a gracious flexibility, a sense of energy that abhorred every kind of waste of time, a sense of measure that avoided bombast and redundancy, a clear intelligence foreign to everything partaking of obscurity or vagueness, and a dialect characterized by superior seriousness, manliness and vigour of language, a habit in short in all things of advancing directly and resolutely to the goal. The Greek ideal was no less than complete human perfection, and the Greek genius at its best included the definiteness and practical energy of the Roman with the moral fervor of the Jew, while the Roman and the Jew sacrificed flexibility, imagination—the one to his political, the other to his moral and religious bent.

In the 16th century an almost Athenian turn for gaiety, wit and fearless thinking arose, an Athenian impatience of restraint, of all stiffness, hardness, narrowness, prejudice, and want of amiability. Shakspeare at his best is a Greek in radiant clearness and pregnancy of utterance. In critical as in creative writing, the clear, appreciative, Hellenic bent appeared. Sidney's *Defence of Poesie*, written between 1583–1595, is one of the monuments of the noblest phase of perhaps

the noblest movement of English thought. Filled with a longing for perfection beyond the thought of any but a poet, Sidney gives us the poetry, rather than the theory, of criticism, and is the standing proof in his own age, as Shelley is in ours, that there must be brought to the interpretation of poetry some measure of the same delicacy and spontaneity of consciousness as went to its production. He would not have the poet's golden moments, those gleams like the flashing of a shield when earth and the common face of Nature speak to him of rememberable things, those blessed moods in which the burthen and the mystery, the heavy and weary weight of all this unintelligible world is lightened, when this earth he walks on seems not earth, this light that strikes his eyeball is not light, this air that smites his forehead is not air but vision—yea, his very hand and foot, in moments when he feels he cannot die, and knows himself no vision to himself nor the high God, a vision,—Sidney would not have those evanescent gleams of spirit which it is the poet's function to seize and fix in shining lines for our consolation and stay, tested by the sordid and narrow experience of the comfortable worldling or the shallow and conceited dilettante. "Disdaining to be tied to any such subjection and lifted by the vigour of his own invention into another nature, the poet is not enclosed," he says, "within the narrow warrant of Nature's gifts, but freely ranges within the zodiac of his own wit." Yet his enthusiasm never becomes romantic idealism, never lets go its hold of the fact; if he speaks of the imagination it is not of a faculty different from and antagonistic to the reason, but simply the reason in a glow, the reason lighted up with emotion, becoming enamoured of the truth which it perceives. When we can feel with Keats that "Beauty is truth, truth beauty," then reason has become imagination. This is the relation that Sidney saw between the two faculties: "There is no art delivered unto mankind," he says, "that hath not the works of Nature for its principal

object." Poetry, that is to say, is just the breath and finer spirit of all knowledge. A good composition cannot be contrary to rules. It may be contrary to certain principles supposed in ignorance to be general, but every good composition is in perfect harmony with all known and true rules, and thousands of others so delicate that they can never be formulated, and can be traced only by the most apprehensive delicacy of eye, ear or thought. The same largeness of view, the same catholicity of taste, is shown in his treatment of form. His classic sympathy appears in his references to Sackville's *Gorboduc*, which, while praising for climbing to the height of Seneca's style, and as full of notable morality, he censures for violations of the unities, both by Aristotle's precept and common reason. But he was also the eloquent champion of the English language and verse: "Since the modern form delights," he says, "though in its own way it obtaineth the same purpose; there being in either sweetness; wanting in neither, majesty." From this it is evident that form and study of form were regarded by Sidney not as ends in themselves, as with many a later poet and critic, but as means to an end, the spiritual interpretation of life. In virtue of his preference for the things of the spirit, his comparative indifference to matters of form, the ardour of his morality and the intensity of his enthusiasm, Sidney has spoken to the fine spirits of all ages, and his book is an enduring call to high thinking.

Work like Shakspeare's in the creative and Sidney's in the critical sphere makes us with whom flexibility of mind and fearless thinking are only now after many vicissitudes coming into honour again, to feel often as if we were only catching up to the Elizabethan age, as if in Arnold's phrase the English spirit had entered the prison of Puritanism in the 17th century and turned the key upon itself for two hundred years. But this beautiful apparition of Hellenism was a premature appearance, as its earlier manifestation in Athens itself was

also premature. The Greek genius breathed like spring for a few lovely days over western Europe, and the thickets were all becoming alive with jubilant voices when returning winter struck sadness into the heart of the year and hushed all the joyous melody. And the cause of the failure of the Greek spirit to maintain itself in the 16th century was the same as in the 3rd century before Christ: the moral and religious fibre in humanity was not sufficiently braced. Indeed, its failure was perhaps more inevitable in Elizabethan England than in ancient Athens. The fearless thinking and flexible intelligence of the Athenians were the gradual conquests of several generations of progress, while the intellectual liberation of England was, comparatively, an affair of a moment. Men restored to liberty or having suddenly recovered the use of a limb, usually express their joy in all sorts of fantastic capers. Many Elizabethans strike one as acting in a similar manner. Suddenly emerging from the prison house of the middle ages they cut the queerest intellectual capers, as if solely to demonstrate their own enfranchisement. Shakspeare, the sanest poet of the period, is not free from conceits that can be regarded only as a sort of intellectual gymnastics.

They that have power to hurt and will do none,
That do not do the thing they most do show,
That moving others are themselves as stone,
Unmoyed, cold, and to temptation slow;
They rightly do inherit heaven's graces,
And husband nature's riches from expense;
They are the lords and owners of their faces,
Others but stewards of their excellence.
The summer's flower is to the summer sweet,
Though to itself it only live and die;
But if that flower with base infection meet,
The basest weed outbraves its dignity:
For sweetest things turn sourest by their deeds;
Lillies that fester smell far worse than weeds.

Examples of this curious, fanciful subtilization of thought

are abundantly found in Shakspeare. Lady Macbeth's speeches, for example :

Memory, the warder of the brain,
Shall be a fume and the receipt of reason,
A limbeck only.

and again—

When you durst do that you were a man,
And to be more than what you were you would
Be so much more the man.

This, which is a marked but not an essential feature of Shakspeare's style, is characteristic of his lesser contemporaries, among whom such atrocities as the following are common enough :

Fate shall fail to vent her gall
Till mine vent thousands.

The nation whose poets produce such conceits must purify itself seven times in the fire, must expel its nature with a fork before they are adequate to the highest spiritual effort, to the noble simplicity and high serenity of the greatest poetry. It was not their fancifulness, though a strong current of opposition to all this extravagance of sentiment and language had been operating from the beginning, but their licentiousness that first roused the strong ethical common sense of the English people. In other words, it was not the influence of Rome but of Judea that first superseded that of Greece.

HEBRAISM.

Puritanism was the reaction of the conscience and moral sense of our race against the moral indifference and lax rules of conduct which came in with the Renaissance. Even apart from the moral relaxation of the Renaissance, Puritanism had so assimilated Bible ideas and phraseology "names," says Matthew Arnold, "like Ebenezer and notions like hewing

Agag in pieces became so natural that the sense of affinity between the Hebrew and the Teutonic nature was quite strong, and a middle class Anglo-Saxon much more readily imagined himself Ehud's cousin than Sophocles' or Euripides'." "Puritanism, in short, was," Arnold says again, "the reaction of Hebraism against Hellenism manifesting itself as was natural in a people with a signal affinity for the bent which was the master bent of Hebrew life—an overpowering sense of righteousness. It undoubtedly checked and changed the movement of the Renaissance which we see producing in the reign of Elizabeth such wonderful fruits. Undoubtedly it stopped the prominent rule and direct development of Hellenism and gave prominence to another order of ideas. But the defeat of Hellenism proves that its ascendancy at that moment would not have been for the world's good." Puritanism was the appointed discipline for the licentiousness of the later Elizabethan period. We have been singing the praises of flexible intelligence, conduct is also deserving of praise. The idea of a moral order of the universe which it is man's happiness to go along with and his misery to go counter to is an idea capable of arousing the emotions and giving rise to poetry, and Puritanism, too, brought forth its poet and man of letters—Milton. We are all supposed to be familiar with Milton's poetry. His criticism, though meagre, had the same grand austerity as his poetry—somewhat limited intellectually and æsthetic, but pure as the naked heavens, sonorous as the sea.

Puritanism, like Hellenism, however, soon showed its latent faults, and England felt the imperious need of freeing itself from the tyrannous pre-occupation with religion which the Puritan age had exercised. The same instinct of self-preservation which prompted the race to reject the civilization of Rome when it became licentious and materialistic, mediævalism, when it developed into excessive otherworldliness, and Hellenism, when its flexibility proved a menace to moral

order and right, now protested against Puritanism itself—its want of measure and sanity, its mysticism and fanaticism.

CLASSICISM.

Clearness of thought and clearness of utterance were the watchwords of the Augustans. They resolutely closed their senses to all feelings of mystery and awe, to all ideas of unseen and eternal realities so constantly present to the Puritan mind. The boundless imagination, unspeakable aspiration, overflowing enthusiasm of the Renaissance, and the Puritan's vivid realization of the supersensual world were equally unintelligible, equally regarded as morbid or diseased. Common sense and utilitarian points of view were everywhere adopted. It was the great age of prose and reason. The scientific spirit, which now became dominant, was from the first one of the undercurrents of the Renaissance movement. From the earlier part of the 16th century we find distinct traces of an effort to define the rules of the mother tongue. Cox's *Rhetoric*, published in 1530, seems to have been the first of the manuals that have to do with the English language. In 1586 Bullokar could speak of his *Bref Grammar* as the first grammar of English that ever was. Ascham in his *Schoolmaster* (1570) argues vigorously for classic regularity, and disparages the use of rhyme then coming in. Spenser and Harvey were also opposed to the use of rhyme, and enthusiastic believers in the possibility of establishing through the authority of parliament a uniform orthography and prosody. Daniels, in his defence of rhyme, indicates a change of opinion regarding rhyme, but he is quite in harmony with the writers already mentioned in his insistence on regularity and law in language and versification. Gascoigne in 1575 almost anticipates the later classical school in his rule: Finish the meaning at the end of every staff when you write staves, and at the end of every two lines when you write in

couplets. Puttenham's *Art of English Poesy*, published in 1589, shows a praiseworthy effort in its division into three books, the first of poets and poesie, the second of proportion, the third of ornament. It defines one hundred and seven figures, insists on proper accentuation and orthography, and defends rhyme as compensating for the loss of quantity. The next important contribution to the development of criticism was Ben Jonson's *Timbers or Discoveries*; indeed, the book may be said to contain a little of the later classicism. Jonson tried to make good the long-felt want of an English grammar, and he again and again says he would have the poet such as he is or should be, by nature, by exercise, by imitation, by study, brought through the disciplines of grammar, logic, rhetoric and ethics. Consciousness of purpose, deference to the past, acceptance of reason, as the supreme authority, mark Jonson's poetry and criticism. Langbaine, Dennis, Walsh, "the muse's judge and friend," Mr. Rymer, whose judicious observation Dryden and Pope both praise, carried forward the classical movement, but Dryden is the truest interpreter of the new spirit; in him there culminated a century and a half of critical progress, a progress towards the end of the period very much quickened by contact with France, for it is noteworthy that while in the Hellenizing period the literature of Greece was the source of inspiration and in the Hebraizing time, the Bible, France, the inheritor of Latin culture, was the source of stimulus at a time when clearness and rationality were the guiding ideas. A movement having for its object the freeing of the national mind from its absorbing pre-occupation with religion and the attaining of regularity, uniformity, precision, and balance both in thought and in expression must be expected to bring some negative excess, some touch of frost to the imagination; the men of letters whose destiny it may be to bring their nation to the attainment of fit and regular vehicles of expression, must

of necessity, whether they work in prose or verse, give a predominating and almost exclusive attention to the qualities mentioned, and this must involve some repressing and silencing of poetry. Dryden, from his nearness to the great age of Elizabeth, had a wide intellectual and artistic sympathy, but there is sufficient evidence in his *Essay on Dramatic Poetry* and in his later prefaces that a predominant interest in form had brought a narrowing and numbing of imagination. Ethical aim, simple thought, regular rhythm, correct diction, sober imagination and respect for the authority of the past were what he required of the poet. Poetry, they believed, should be practical in purpose, definite in thought and lucid in expression. In Sidney, as we saw, form is comparatively insignificant, spirituality everything; in Dryden, form is fully half. From this on the interest in form is more and more exclusive, criticism comes to be a regular occupation, reviewing arises, the passion and passionate flow of poetry become an increasing impertinence to the professional critic, who values nothing but the glare and glitter of a perpetual yet broken and heterogeneous imagery, or rather an amphibious something made up half of image and half of abstract meaning of which the following is only a more ludicrous instance:

No more will I endure love's pleasing pain,
Or round my heart's leg tie his galling chain.

ROMANTICISM.

Form without meaning, like every other sham, like Mediævalism when it had degenerated into hypocrisy, Hellenism when its flexibility had become moral indifference, or Puritanism when its religious enthusiasm became fanatical, had to go, and men tried to get back the passion and passionate flow of poetry without form, if need be. That the movement from classicism was revolutionary rather than evolutionary or gradual, must be ascribed to the pernicious influence of the

reviews. Professional criticism, from the nature of the case, loves definite standards in thought and style, and the reviews were, in consequence, the strongholds of classicism, and classicism in its most wooden form. The great reading public, which the establishment of newspapers and reviews and the general advance of knowledge were creating, also liked definiteness. To one just emerging into the intellectual life, just beginning to take an interest in language and style, such glare and glitter of heterogeneous imagery as the reviews inculcated an admiration for, is the height of poetical achievement. Any one who has ever taught composition or read the composition of a beginner attentively, will admit the truth of this. In the reviews, then, and in a class of general readers just emerging into intellectuality, a narrow classicism unable or unwilling to adopt more delicate tests of poetical excellence was strongly entrenched.

In the meantime, however, the scientific movement was bringing to the finer spirit of the time a cure for its own materialism. The simpler and more mechanical conceptions of the earlier stages of the scientific movement were proving their inadequacy to explain every phase of life and a more complex, more evolutionary, more modern view of life and progress was in some quarters already finding acceptance. The experimental philosophers, by a constant criticism of the sources of knowledge and an extending inclusion of the mental faculties, had indicated their own need of a more thorough psychology, and opened the way to the idealism of our day. An emotional intensity, an enthusiasm which fifty years earlier would have been laughed at, began to mingle with the earlier reasonableness of judgment, to guide the nation's growing sense of human interdependence, the exacter analysis of philosophy, and the splendid development of science, and to drive the new England to nature and humanity for relief from its own shallow and artificial philosophy and art. In the

midst of the greatest of the classicists there was growing up in other words a criticism at once antithetic and complementary to their teaching. In support of this statement it is only necessary to refer to such writers as Addison, Croxall, Parnell, Thompson, Allan Ramsay and Gray, to such works as Percy's collection of ancient ballads, and to the continuous imitation of the Spenserian stanza and the Miltonic blank verse. In Parnell's poetry there is a genuine feeling for nature very unlike the Augustan spirit and very suggestive of Wordsworth :

How deep yon azure dyes the sky
Where orbs of gold unnumbered lie,
While thro' their ranks in silver pride
The nether crescent seems to glide !
The slumbering breeze forgets to breathe,
The lake is smooth and clear beneath,
Where once again the spangled show
Descends to meet our eyes below.

Parnell's *Hymn to Contentment* also shows true nature feeling, and again seems to foreshadow Wordsworth :

The sun that walks his airy way
To light the world and give the day,
The moon that shines with borrowed light,
The seas that roll unnumbered waves,
The wood that spreads its shady leaves,
The field whose ears conceal the grain,
The yellow treasure of the plain,
All of these and all I see,
Should be sung and sung of me ;
They speak their maker as they can,
But want and ask the tongue of man.

His *Fairy Tale* contains a breath of real romanticism :

In Britain's Isle and Arthur's days,
When midnight fairies danced the maze,
Lived Edwin of the Green
Edwin I was a gentle youth,
Endowed with courage, sense and truth,
Though badly shaped had been.

Space will not permit the illustration of the growth of romanticism, but from Parnell to Gray the stream continued to grow in volume and melody. What is called the graveyard literature of the last century is another evidence of this tendency—long, reflective verses on death and immortality which, if not exactly romantic in feeling, were akin to Romanticism, and certainly reactionary to the Augustan spirit, which strove to exclude all shadows of the grave and all mystery of the future. Blair and Young are the chief examples of this school. Percy's collection of ballad literature also indicated an increasing interest in times and conditions remote from his own. Still another indication was the continuous imitation of Spenser's stanza form and the many attempts to catch something of the melody of the Miltonic blank verse. Though the heroic couplet or iambic pentameter running in couples was the standard verse form of the classicists, we find men like Prior, Thompson, Cambridge, West, Shenstone, Warton, Mendez and Denton from time to time during the whole classical period trying experiments in Spenser's and Milton's favourite verse forms.

Gray, penetrated by the spirit of the future, but true to the logic and clearness of the old order, might have made the course of critical development much more equable and gradual if he had only been able to speak out. Arnold calls Gray the man who never spoke out in another sense, it is true; but it is equally applicable to him as a critic. A narrow classicism entrenched in the reviews had set itself against the encroachments of the new romantic spirit, though from time compelled to make grudging concessions to it, as for example in Shakspearean criticism. Had Gray spoken out, a happy marriage of classical and romanticism might have occurred, the new criticism might have kept the best of the past, might have been progressive and evolutionary instead of violent and reactionary; might have retained from the start that apprecia-

tion of the virtues of the classicists which we are only now coming to admit, and the failure to see and admit which has been very detrimental. As it was, however, Gray never spoke out; the critics, on the principle that whom the gods destroy they first make mad, grew more arrogant, and the attempt of Jeffrey to put down Wordsworth precipitated the revolt in which the whole classic tradition was swept away and a triumphant romanticism established in its stead.

Romanticism is characterized by mysticism, subjectivity, emotional intensity, love of the picturesque, love of the remote either in space or time. The romantic writer is fond of ivy-mantled towers and moonlit water, of old castles, of mountains, of sunrises and sunsets. He is interested in the curious phases of human emotion and often has a passion for the unnatural and the horrible, as in tales of ghosts or deeds of blood.

As Romanticism was a native Teutonic or Gothic upheaval, Germany, the Teutonic fatherland, naturally became the centre of influence, and Coleridge, by native temperament and intercourse with Germany, the critic of the movement. Coleridge had a mind subtle, sensitive and of great range and delicacy, and his interpretation of special passages from Wordsworth's and other poetry in the *Biographia Literaria* has done more than any other single influence to inspire modern criticism with fineness, delicacy and spirituality. The most musical and philosophical poet of the century could not bring his poetic intuition to bear on the critical study of literature without enriching for all time our conception of its spirit and purpose. His suggestive etymologizing or discussion of the origin and meaning of words has opened our eyes to the latent poetry of words which in our ordinary employment of them, like the sounds of nature referred to by the musician in *Abt Vogler*, seem in no way remarkable, but brought together by the poet have the power from their complementary associa-

tions, complementary imaginative content—call it what you will—of stirring our deepest emotional being.

And I know not if, save in this, such gift be allowed to man,
That out of three sounds he frame, not a fourth sound, but a star.
Consider it well : each tone of our scale in itself is nought ;
It is everywhere in the world—loud, soft, and all is said :
Give it to me to use ! I mix it with two in my thought,
And, there ! Ye have heard and seen : consider and bow the head !

Such power belongs to the poet as well as to the musician, illustrations of which can be picked up anywhere :

O listen, for the vale profound
Is overflowing with the sound.

That orb'd maiden with white fire laden,
Whom mortals call the moon,
Glides glimmering o'er my fleece-like floor
By the midnight breezes strewn.

But it was Coleridge who first turned our attention to the poetical content of old and homely words used in new and suggestive arrangements. He was the first, too, to state explicitly—the poets of course always felt it instinctively—that metre in itself in the hands of a great poet has a wonderful power of suggestiveness, of expressing the poet's criticism of life, and therefore that metre and rhythm must be studied afresh in relation to the poet's main thought and emotion. Finally, and almost as a necessary corollary of the latter, he first pointed out the ethical value of poetry in spite of, perhaps even in virtue of, its having no direct ethical purpose.

But he had his limitations ; his criticism was not sufficiently inductive. There is no hard and fast line between inductive and deductive reasoning, the principles of the deductive syllogism being only the results of complete induction, but for practical purposes it makes considerable difference whether one's mental habit is inductive or deductive. Coleridge's habit was deductive. By an examination of the

faculties of the human mind, which in the case of every psychologist means his own individual mind, he hoped to get a universal test for poetry in the discovery of a distinct poetical faculty. His famous distinction between the fancy and the imagination was the result—the former only the common understanding masquerading in poetical dress, the latter the genuine organ of poetry. But the distinction means no more than that to Coleridge certain poems were fanciful, while others were imaginative, and this again means only that trained, as he tells us himself, to prefer Homer to Virgil, Thucydides and Demosthenes to Livy and Cicero, and Shakspeare and Milton to Dryden and Pope, his sympathies did not go out to the classicists. In other words, as the psychologist's data are after all only his own mental processes, the attempt to find an absolute test for poetry by psychological analysis can mean only that the critic arrests his development at a certain point, regards his incomplete development as perfect culture and formulates his own likes and dislikes as universal principles of æsthetics. If we had wills of perfect steadiness and heads of perfect clearness, and lived to be as old as Methusaleh, it might be possible to reach a stage where we could safely formulate laws from our own inner consciousness, but within the brief limits of a human life it is hardly possible to get a familiarity with poetry and art sufficiently wide to make our subjective judgments at all times perfectly sure and true. That the method hampered Coleridge so little, that his criticism was so catholic, proves the width and sympathy of his mind; but it did hamper him to some extent. It narrowed his sympathies for the classicists and gave him an overfondness for mysticism. Now surely Dryden and Pope had good in them, and more good than bad. Since Coleridge's time the *a priori* method has become more and more discredited, and Coleridge's influence on subsequent criticism has been mainly to throw it into the chaotic condition mentioned

at the outset. The distinction between fancy and imagination having been discredited, there remained of Coleridge's work only his insistence in common with the Romantics generally on feeling. But as one man's feeling is not another man's, criticism has reached a condition which seems to justify the Latin dictum, "de gustibus non disputandum," one critic making the test of poetry its power to please by its music and sensuous beauty, another its didactic purpose, another, its insight into life and character; one thinking it should be clear and definite, another that it should be full of allegory and symbolism.

THE NEW HELLENISM.

It is in the prose prefaces of Wordsworth rather than in the critical writings of Coleridge that we first meet with traces of the returning Hellenistic conception of the matter and method of poetry. "Poetry," says Wordsworth in one place, "is the impassioned expression which is in the face of all science;" and in another, "Poetry is the breath and finer spirit of all knowledge." As regards its method or style, he held that there was no essential difference between the language and the movement of poetry and those of good prose. In the prose works of Matthew Arnold these hints have been developed into a systematic theory and practice of criticism. Arnold discards Coleridge's transcendental distinction between phenomena or appearances and things in themselves. To him the ideal or noble is not that of which we can predicate only its complete dissimilarity from the actual world of our experience. As he says in the preface to the *Mixed Essays*, "the ideal life is, in sober and practical truth, none other than man's normal life as we shall one day know it." The ideal and the actual are not opposites but correlative aspects of the one reality, the convex and the concave sides of the same shield. Let us illustrate from mathematics. John Stuart Mill argued

that, as it was impossible for the mathematician to draw a figure in which microscopic examination would not detect irregularity, the conclusions of mathematics rested upon incomplete induction, and could not, therefore, be shown to be universal and necessary. What Mill overlooked was that mathematical reasoning is based not upon the actual diagram, which undoubtedly falls short of ideal perfection, but upon the conception of a perfect figure, by comparison with which the actual figure is judged to be imperfect. If this is so, as obviously it is so, there is no such thing as a pure particular. Every object has two aspects, the particular and the universal. Every object is at once a finite object, existing at a particular time and in a particular place, and an illustration of a law which is universal. This is Arnold's theory of life. The ideal or noble is just the perfection latent in imperfection, and towards which the imperfect tends constantly to approximate, the eternal law or reason which manifests itself in the fleeting and transitory phenomena. Everything has a necessary mode of existence, or, as Arnold says, a true law of its being and its highest fruition is to be obtained only in obedience to this law. Man's true felicity, for example, consists in realizing here and now the possibilities of intelligence, order, courtesy and refinement that are implanted in his nature. This is for him the ideal earthly life. Here is his present heaven if he has a mind to make it so.

With the rejection of the otherworldliness of Coleridge and his fellow mystics there is necessarily involved the denial of any fundamental distinction between fancy and imagination, reason and faith. For the perception of the ideal significance, the spiritual element in things, there is needed not a different faculty from that employed in scientific investigation, but only a greater intensity of soul. The objects of the poet's contemplation are those which engage the attention of the man of science. Only whereas the ~~man~~ of science treats them as

merely individual things or beings, the poet clothes them with a "light that never was on sea or land." Science abstracts, isolates, breaks off portions from the rounded whole of truth. The sense of ideal unity which scientific analysis thus tends to destroy, poetry, with its direct intuitive glance into the eternal relations of things, attempts to restore. Science forces us to regard particular things not as ideals, but examples merely of general classes. Poetry treats the same particulars as in Shelley's *Cloud*, for example, as symbols of some deeper spiritual truth. Poetry is always on the watch for those brief moments caught from fleeting time which exhibit the appropriate calm of blest eternity, for those happy combinations of time, place, person and circumstances which seem to point to something more universal. When an object or a situation has been thus vividly apprehended by the poet he is compelled to find a vehicle for his emotion in some form of artistic expression. He instinctively employs a heightened diction and a more melodious movement, and the emotions of his hearers or readers as instinctively respond to those modes of expression. Hence, as Arnold says, poetry is simply the most telling criticism of life. Keats' description of the forward-bending lover on the Grecian urn—

Bold lover, never, never canst thou kiss,
Though winning near the goal—yet, do not grieve;
She cannot fade, though thou hast not thy bliss,
For ever wilt thou love and she be fair!

is the most telling way of suggesting that while in human lives youth and beauty and love are transitory and fleeting, in their own natures they are eternal and imperishable. "In the best poetry," says Arnold, "the substance and matter on the one hand and the style and manner on the other, have a mark, an accent of high beauty, worth and power." "The substance and matter of the best poetry," he goes on, "acquire their special character from possessing in an eminent degree truth

and seriousness. . . . To the style and manner of the best poetry, their special character, their accent, is given by their diction, and yet more by their movement, and though we distinguish between the two characters, the two accents, of superiority, yet they are nevertheless vitally connected one with the other. The superior character of truth and seriousness in the matter and substance of the best poetry is inseparable from the superiority of diction and movement marking its style and manner. The two superiorities are closely related and are in steadfast proportion one to the other. So far as high poetic truth and seriousness are wanting to a poet's matter and substance, so far also we may be sure will a high poetic stamp of diction and movement be wanting to his style and manner. In proportion as the high stamp of diction and movement again is absent from a poet's style and manner, we shall find also that high poetic truth and seriousness are absent from his substance and matter."

Here we have the true Hellenic view of art which, now again emerging after many vicissitudes, we may hope to see prevail. Spiritual freedom and classic restraint are its watch-words; flexibility, delicacy, ideality, and withal, order and sanity, its characteristics. All the charms that have ever been felt in poetry Hellenism feels, but in their proper relative importance. It admits the charm of the poetry which the æsthetic school admires,

Light feet, dark violet eyes and parted lips,
Soft dimpled hands, white neck and creamy breast,

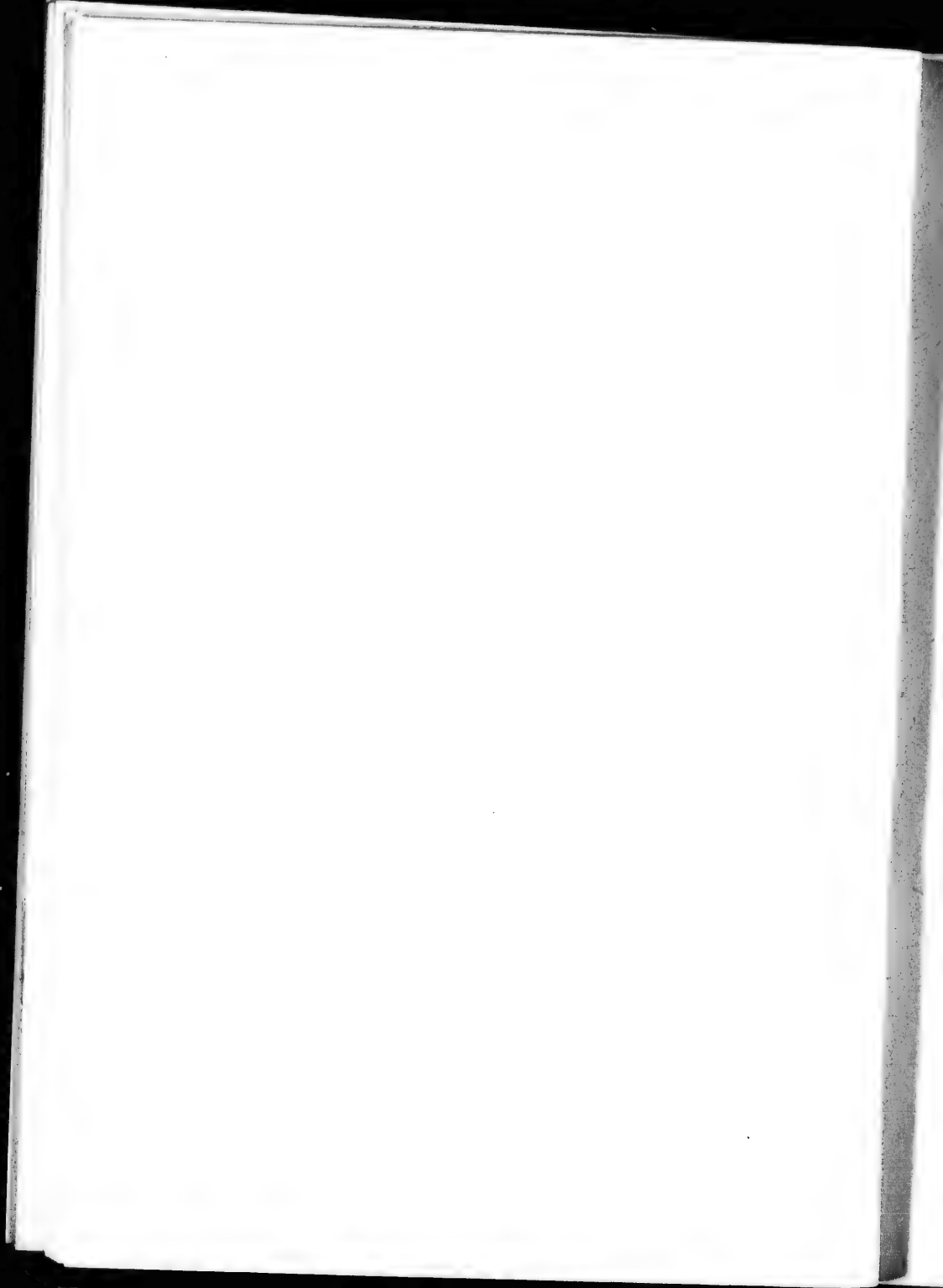
admits that such lines contain a criticism of life, but denies that idealizing or divinization of pleasure alone can give the highest poetry. Hellenism admits the grandeur of the moral order of the universe and its power of stimulating races and individuals to splendid bursts of poetry, but reminds the lovers of grave and serious poetry

that there are other aspects of the not-ourselves besides the moral order, the world of science and art, for example, which have been no less capable of inspiring other races and individuals. With Emerson, Coleridge and the transcendentalists, it admires in poetry the element of mystery and wonder, but then where everything is wonderful, everything providential, everything miraculous, there is no room for exceptional cases. The new criticism has all the spirituality, the sensitiveness to subtle gleams of meaning, of the critical work of Coleridge without Coleridge's turgidity and mysticism, all the order and sanity of the classicists without their woodenness. The new criticism more and more tends to take as the proper basis of poetry not phantasy or superstition, nor yet common sense and wit, but the imaginative reason. Oriental races may continue to rest their poetry on the sensuous imagination, society verse may sparkle with antithesis and epigram, Semitic poetry may separate the ideal and the actual, the human and the divine, and place its ideal world in a life beyond the grave, the Indo-European mind is increasingly coming to believe that the ideal is but the true law towards which the actual constantly approximates, to believe that all of animated nature are but organic harps

diversely framed

That tremble into thought as o'er them sweeps,
Plastic and vast, one intellectual breeze,
At once the soul of each and God of all,

to place its ideal in opposition to Semiticism in this world, to consider all excessive symbolism, all mysticism and other-worldliness as more or less of an impertinence and to regard poetry as a revelation through the medium of the music of verse and the subtle suggestiveness of language of the latent beauty and spirituality of the world around us.



WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

[William Wordsworth was born April 7, 1770, at Cockermouth, a town on the Derwent River, at the foot of the Cumberland highlands. His parents, who were both of hardy northern stock, died while he was yet but a boy. At Hawkshead, a neighbouring town, he passed his early school days, and these were days of great freedom in reading and playing. In 1787, Wordsworth entered St. John's College, Cambridge, and in 1791, having secured his degree after a college course by no means remarkable for scholastic achievements, he left Cambridge for France, whither he had gone with a college friend during his last vacation. His enthusiasm for the Revolution kept him across the Channel for a year, when the Reign of Terror, and, perhaps, pressure from home, drove him back to England. With no definite plans for the future he went to London in 1792, and spent the summer of 1793 in the Isle of Wight. In 1795, with his sister, Dorothy, he settled at Racedown, in Dorsetshire, whence in 1797, to be near Coleridge at Nether Stowey, he removed to Alfoxden, in Somersetshire. In 1793, Wordsworth had published a small volume of poems, and, in conjunction with Coleridge, he issued at Bristol in 1798 the first edition of the famous *Lyrical Ballads*. In the same year, the two friends went to Germany, Wordsworth with his sister spending the winter at Goslar, where several of his best known shorter poems were written. Returning to England in 1799, he finally settled with his sister in the North Country, at first at Grasmere, where in 1800 he published the second edition of the *Lyrical Ballads*. In 1802 he married Mary Hutchinson. Until 1813 he lived in various houses in the neighbourhood of Grasmere, but after that date, with the exception of vacation tours in Wales, Scotland and on the Continent, his remaining years were passed at Rydal Mount. After 1800, Wordsworth's poetic career was a steady and productive one. Many short poems, suggested by the incidents and feelings of the day, were published between 1803 and 1840. In 1799, whilst in Germany, he began the

Prelude, intending to make it the introduction to a great philosophical poem, the *Recluse*, of which only a part, the *Excursion*, was completed. Large collections of sonnets were the products of the years 1805-1825. In 1795-6, he attempted dramatic composition in his *Borderers*, with indifferent success. In his prefaces to his various publications, in essays and pamphlets upon the social and political questions of the day, he proved himself to be an impassioned and forcible prose writer. In 1839, he was enthusiastically honoured by the University of Oxford, in 1843 he became Poet-Laureate, and in 1850, after a long and singularly happy life, he died at Rydal Mount.]

Chronological Table of Works with Dates of Publication.

[It must be noted that the order here given is only approximately correct in the case of several longer poems and compilations whose production was the work of years.]

Evening Walk.....	}	1793
Descriptive Sketches		
The Female Vagrant		
Lyrical Ballads (First Edition)		1798
Peter Bell.....	}	1819
The Wagoner.....		
Lyrical Ballads (Second Edition)		1800
Memorials of a Tour in Scotland		1803
Prelude		1850
Ode—Intimations of Immortality		(?)
Poems		1807
The White Doe of Rylstone		1815
Miscellaneous Sonnets		
Prose Pamphlets		1809
The Excursion	}	1814
Memorials of a Tour in Scotland		
Thanksgiving Ode		1816
Sonnets on the River Duddon		1820
Memorials of a Tour on the Continent		1820, 22
Ecclesiastical Sketches	}	1822
Description of the Scenery of the Lakes		
Yarrow Re-visited and Other Poems		1834
Minor Pieces		
Ode on Installation of Prince Albert		1847

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GENERAL ESTIMATE.

ONE of the most striking characteristics of the nineteenth century is, as already pointed out, its interest in the study of origins. Beginning with the natural sciences, the idea of evolution or development has invaded and revived, reconstructed and transformed all departments of human knowledge or is now rapidly doing so. The study of literature, though most conservative in its methods, has at length begun to yield to the evolutionary trend of all modern thought. Once, criticism was regarded as the study of literary style only. An advance was made when to the study of mere style there was added a study of thought, though only for the purpose of showing the harmony between thought and style. The next step was to require from a writer not merely a harmony of thought and expression but a correspondence between his thought and the laws of universal logic. In our day we are coming to see that a writer's deviations from absolute logic, the personal or subjective element in his work, his powers and his limitations can be fairly estimated only by viewing his life as a process.

We no longer confine our attention to a single point, "the culminating and exceptional point; the summary, fictitious and arbitrary, of a thought and of a work." *Poeta nascitur non fit*, a dictum which has done more than anything else in the past to block the investigation of literary origins, is not by

us so much regarded. The genius is no longer "a god seated immovable amidst his perfect work, like Jupiter on Olympus," nor his work a flawless product issuing ready-made from that divine head. We wish to see a physiognomy and not a halo, a man rather than a statue, to trace for our profit, the labour, the attempts, the weaknesses and the failures, to be shown how the thing is done, not to be asked to venerate a model of unapproachable excellence.

The seeds of genius, we feel, are widely scattered. There is no one who, in youth or early manhood, has not frequently been startled by intimations of some

Sweet strange mystery
Of what beyond these things may lie
And yet remain unseen ;

and the glory of life is that we never entirely lose the power of being thus impressed by the mystery of the world about us.

But the majority of men allow their first creative sensibility to dwindle from disuse, their souls are soon subdued to the regular action of the world, their noblest possibilities become overlaid with an immense deposit of conventional habits and views. The average man is sectarian in religion, partizan in politics, conventional in his beliefs and practice, a mere pin, rounded and polished on society's great pincushion, indistinguishable from the thousands of others. There are some, however, who strive

Not without action to die
Fruitless, but something to snatch
From dull oblivion nor all
Glut the devouring grave.

These, the great original spirits, differ from the rest of man-

kind, not at first in greater sensitiveness to underlying truth and beauty, but in early recognizing, dimly enough perhaps, the sustaining and consoling influence of those first transitory gleams of spirit and in resolving at all hazards to cherish them until they become a constant power.

Three main questions are therefore involved in the study of any great poet, the answer to which must be sought in a chronological arrangement and examination of his works such as Mr. Stopford Brooke has given us in his "Tennyson," supplemented by whatever biographical or autobiographical details are available: (1) What was the nature of the struggle through which his special sensitiveness was developed? (2) What powers of style did he acquire for the expression of his deeper view of life? (3) What may be regarded as his ultimate pronouncement on the three great themes of all art and thought: nature, man, and God?

I.—WORDSWORTH'S PSYCHOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT.

The *Prelude*, a poem in fourteen books, intended for an introduction to the uncompleted *Recluse*, contains Wordsworth's spiritual autobiography. The poem is of moderate literary but great psychological value, abounding in passages of exquisite beauty in which the poet has caught and fixed in shining lines the almost incommunicable influences leading him to nature and developing this feeling into a faculty of interpretation. The main points to notice in the *Prelude* are: I. *Origin and growth*: (1) the mysterious origin of soul; (2) the importance of circumstances not in creating faculty but in giving it its bent; (3) the subjective and egoistic impurity of

his earlier feeling for nature; (4) the traces even in that earlier time of a less personal and purer feeling. II. *The struggle with lower tendencies*: (1) the beginning in school-time of a conscious effort to foster and cherish his purer feelings; (2) the negative influence of Cambridge; (3) the repression of obtruding mechanical aims; (4) the dedication of his powers; (5) a transitory and superficial interest in the active and dramatic side of life—London and Paris. III. *Serenity*: (1) the recognition of his limitations (“the common growth of mother earth suffices me”); (2) the strengthening and deepening, under his sister’s influence, of his feeling for nature and for peasant life.

ORIGIN AND GROWTH.

It can scarcely be doubted that there are innate and hereditary dispositions as a rule united with marked differences in temperament and structure of body, which man brings with him into the world, or that Wordsworth, sprung from hardy North of England stock, received from both parents the inheritance of a moral nature, healthy, frugal and robust. His mother especially possessed

Of modest meekness, simple mindedness,
A heart that found benignity and hope
Being itself benign.

This, however, is uncertain ground. Wordsworth on the whole lays no great stress on heredity. Each man is a new creation, a fresh incarnation of the divine spirit, a miracle whose beginning transcends our powers of explanation:

Hard task, vain hope to analyze the mind
If each most obvious and particular thought,
Not in a mystical and idle sense,
But in the words of reason, deeply weighed,
Hath no beginning.

As he grew older and widened the range of his sports, he began to impress upon all forms of nature

the characters
Of danger and desire ; and thus did make
The surface of the universal earth
With triumph and delight, with hope and fear
Work like a sea.

He began to be conscious of nature as an awful external presence rebuking injustice and curbing his irregular passions.

Ere I had told
Ten birthdays, . . . 'twas my joy
With store of springes over my shoulder hung
To range the open heights where woodcocks run
Along the smooth green turf, . . .
 Moon and stars
Were o'er my head. I was alone
And seemed a trouble to the peace
That dwelt among them. Sometimes it befell
In these night wanderings that a strong desire
O'erpowered my better reason, and the bird
Which was the captive of another's toil
Became my prey ; and when the deed was done
I heard among the solitary hills
Low breathings coming after me, and sounds
Of undistinguishable motion, steps almost as silent
As the turf they trod.

Of a similar nature are his feelings after taking the boat that did not belong to him :

I dipped my oars into the silent lake
And, as I rose upon the stroke, my boat
Went heaving through the water like a swan ;
When, from behind that craggy steep, till then
The horizon's bound, a huge peak, black and huge,
As if with voluntary power instinct
Upreared its head. I struck and struck again,
And growing still in stature the grim shape
Towered up between me and the stars, and still,
For so it seemed, with purpose of its own
And measured motion like a living thing,
Strode after me. With trembling oars I turned,
And through the silent waters stole my way
Back to the covert of the willow tree ;
• • • • •

. for many days, my brain
 Worked with a dim and undetermined sense
 Of unknown modes of being ;
 huge and mighty forms, that do not live
 Like living men, moved slowly through the mind
 By day, and were a trouble to my dreams.

These passages show that Wordsworth's creative sensibility early began to react upon nature, but they also show the subjective impurity of this early feeling. Nature in both cases is an external and minatory existence standing over against the nature of man. The skating scene, though less impure in feeling, especially in the lines

Far distant hills
 Into the tumult sent an alien sound
 Of melancholy not unnoticed,

is not by any means even in those lines the pure and unegoistic expression of nature's relation to the human mind that we find in such lines as

The silence that is in the starry sky,
 The sleep that is among the lonely hills.

The buoyancy of youth and the expansion of the physical life made it impossible for his imagination to be quite free at this time from a fault which Shelley to the end of his life failed to eliminate—the fault of reading into nature his own feelings of the moment.

We hissed along the polished ice in games,
 Confederate, imitative of the chase
 And woodland pleasures
 with the din
 Smitten, the precipices rang aloud
 while far distant hills
 Into the tumult sent an alien sound
 Of melancholy, not unnoticed,

Not seldom from the uproar I retired
 Into a silent bay, or sportively
 Glanced sideways, leaving the tumultuous throng,
 To cut across the reflex of a star.
 and oftentimes
 When we had given our bodies to the wind,
 And all the shadowy banks on either side
 Came sweeping through the darkness, spinning still
 The rapid line of motion, then at once
 Have I, reclining back upon my heels,
 Stopped short ; yet still the solitary cliffs
 Wheeled by me—even as if the earth had rolled
 With visible motion her diurnal round !
 Behind me did they stretch in solemn train
 Feebler and feebler, and I stood and watched
 Till all was tranquil as a dreamless sleep.

Wordsworth is aware of the early impurity of his imagination, and in marked contrast with the thought of the sixth stanza in the great ode where Nature, the homely nurse, is represented as doing all she can

To make her Foster-child, her inmate, Man,
 Forget the glories he hath known,
 And that imperial palace whence he came,

those fits of vulgar joy, those terrors, pains and early miseries are explained as the means employed by Nature to build up the vision and the faculty divine !

How strange that all
 The terrors, pains and early miseries,
 Regrets, vexations, lassitudes, interfused
 Within my mind, should e'er have borne a part,
 And that a needful part, in making up
 The calm existence that is mine when I
 Am worthy of myself.

Wisdom and spirit of the universe !
 Thou soul that art the eternity of thought,
 That givest to forms and images a breath
 And everlasting motion, not in vain
 By day or star-light, thus from my first dawn
 Of childhood, didst thou intertwine for me
 The passions that build up our human soul ;

Not with the mean and vulgar works of man,
 But with high objects, with enduring things—
 With life and nature—purifying thus
 The elements of feeling and of thought,
 And sanctifying, by such discipline,
 Both pain and fear, until we recognize
 A grandeur in the beating of the heart.

How well the elements of thought and feeling were purified, how finely, in contradistinction to Shelley, Wordsworth succeeded in eliminating this early imaginative impurity of his thought, his better lines and passages abundantly prove. Even in childhood there were not wanting flashes of a higher inspiration :

Nor sedulous as I have been to trace
 How nature by *extrinsic passion* first
 Peopled the mind with forms sublime or fair,
 And made me love them, may I here omit
 How other pleasures have been mine, and joys
 Of subtler origin ; how I have felt,
 Not seldom even in that tempestuous time,
 Those hallowed and pure motions of the sense
 Which seem, in their simplicity, to own
 An intellectual charm ;

Yes, I remember when the changeful earth
 And twice five summers on my mind had stamped
 The faces of the moving year, even then
 I held unconscious intercourse with beauty,
 Old as creation, drinking in a pure
 Organic pleasure from the silver wreaths
 Of curling mist, or from the level plain
 Of waters coloured by impending clouds.

Thus oft amid those fits of vulgar joy
 Which, through all seasons, on a child's pursuits
 Are prompt attendants, 'mid that giddy bliss
 Which, like a tempest, works along the blood,
 And is forgotten ; even then I felt
 Gleams like the flashing of a shield ;—the earth
 And common face of nature spake to me
 Rememberable things.

School time is not wanting in "those fits of vulgar joy,"

but there is also observable a growing delicacy and fineness of perception :

And that single wren
Which one day sang so sweetly in the nave
Of the old church.
So sweetly 'mid the gloom, the invisible bird
Sang to herself, that there I could have made
My dwelling-place, and lived forever there
To hear such music.

THE STRUGGLE WITH LOWER TENDENCIES.

More remarkable, however, is the dawning consciousness of the worth of those subtle visitations and the beginning of a conscious effort to foster and develop the power of receiving them :

Nature intervenient till this time
And secondary, now at length was sought
For her own sake
For I would walk alone,
Under the quiet stars, and at that time
Have felt whate'er there is of power in sound
To breathe an elevated mood, by form
Or image unprofaned ; and I would stand,
If the night blackened with a coming storm,
Beneath some rock, listening to notes that are
The ghostly language of the ancient earth,
Or make their dim abode in distant winds.
Thence did I drink the visionary power.

This is the parting of the ways, perhaps the most important moment in Wordsworth's life, the beginning of the many silent wrestlings of thought which build up the poet's mind. Mere susceptibility will not make one a genius. Every young soul is all budding with susceptibilities and capabilities, but the difficulty ever is to know which is the right one and, when recognized, to be true to it at all costs. That the average man soon gives up the struggle is too sadly obvious. The

He ceases to regard nature as a distinct external and minatory existence and begins to feel the organic unity of her life in which he has a part ; to be conscious of an immanent spirit

"whose dwelling is the light of setting suns, and the round ocean and the living air and the blue sky, and in the mind of man,"—"to recognize a common source of all those shadowy intimations, divine questionings, blank misgivings, visionary gleams" and to experience a new sense of "abiding calm and joy."

I felt the sentiment of Being spread
O'er all that, lost beyond the reach of thought
And human knowledge, to the human eye
Invisible, yet liveth to the heart.

Thus equipped, with few friends, little book culture, and his sensitiveness to all natural phenomena, he goes up to Cambridge. Very slight importance is attached by Wordsworth to college associations. He cannot indeed print the ground where the grass had yielded to the steps of generations of illustrious men, nor mingle with "so many divers samples from the growth of life's sweet season," frequent the rooms once occupied by Spenser and by Milton, nor lie within the sight of the antechapel

where the statue stood
Of Newton with his prism and silent face,
The marble index of a mind forever
Voyaging through strange seas of thought alone

without emotion and stimulus, but college labours seem frivolous after the grave and strenuous peasant life he has known.

Of college labours, of the lecturer's room
All studded round, as thick as chairs could stand.
With loyal students, faithful to their books,
Let others that know more speak as they know.
Such glory was but little sought by me
And little won.

He would not allow himself to be betrayed into lower mechanical phases of energy or occupation, and yet from the

nature of the place it is impossible to prevent lower aims obtruding themselves.

From the first crude days
Of settling time in this untried abode,
I was disturbed at times by prudent thoughts
. some fear
About my future worldly maintenance
And, more than all, a strangeness in the mind,
A feeling that I was not for that hour
Nor for that place.

Here we have the pressure of prudential considerations reinforced by a diffidence as to the genuineness of the call to higher work against which all great men have to struggle. For this struggle strength is always to be had in solitary communion with nature.

Off-times did I quit
My comrades
And as I paced alone the level fields
.
What independent solaces were mine
To mitigate the injurious sway of place
Or circumstance
.
I looked for universal things ; perused
The common countenance of earth and sky
. felt
Incumbencies more awful, visitings
Of the upholder of the tranquil soul
That tolerates the indignities of time
And, from the centre of Eternity
All finite motions overruling, lives
In glory immutable.

No mere delirium of mysticism this ! Keen analytic thought is laying the foundation of that minuteness of observation which makes his poetry as he defines it, the "breath and finer spirit of all knowledge."

The bodily eye
Amidst my strongest workings evermore
Was searching out the lines of difference
As they lie hid in all external forms.

In fact one of the remarkable things about Wordsworth is his sanity, the very slight traces anywhere in his works of a mystical or morbid Rousseauistic feeling for nature. The joy felt in these moments is the joy that comes from all successful exercise of faculty, a sure premonition of the success that is to be achieved along that line. These lofty contemplative moments are much broken in upon by unavoidable college associations.

Full oft the quiet and exalted thoughts
Of loneliness gave way to empty noise
And superficial pastimes ; now and then
Forced labour, and more frequently forced hopes ;
And, worst of all, a treasonable growth
Of indecisive judgments, that impaired
And shook the mind's simplicity.

And it is interesting to compare the regretful retrospect with which Wordsworth looks back upon these interruptions of the contemplative habit, with Carlyle's account, in the *Sartor Resartus*, of his college years and his keen interest in the dramatic movement of life.

With Wordsworth, "companionships, friendships, acquaintances were welcome all," but in such companionships he often "at the stars came forth, perhaps without one quiet thought," and on the whole the time spent at the university was to him a period of somewhat unprofitable contact with the world.

In Book iv, light is dawning upon him. He is becoming conscious of a strength and buoyancy of soul, an originative and interpretative power of mind upon which life can be based, the result of lonely brooding, of cherishing and fostering into faculty his fugitive intentions.

I had inward hopes
 And swellings of the spirit, was wrapped and soothed,
 Conversed with promises, had glimmering views
 How life pervades the undecaying mind ;
 How the immortal soul with Godlike power
 Informs, creates and thaws the deepest sleep
 That time can lay upon her ; how on earth
 Man, if he do but live within the light
 Of high endeavours, daily spreads abroad
 His being, armed with strength that cannot fail.

Peasant life appears in a new light. He sees more clearly and honours the small joys and sorrows of Hawkshead, feels a deeper sympathy with the "old dame," the frank-hearted maids, the woodmen and shepherds :

I read without design, the opinions, thoughts
 Of those plain living people now observed
 With clearer knowledge ; with another eye
 I saw the quiet woodman in the woods,
 The shepherd roam the hills. With new delight,
 This chiefly, did I note my grey-haired dame ;
 Saw her go forth to church or other work.

There are not wanting occasional deviations.

A swarm
 Of heady schemes jostling each other, gawds,
 And feast and dance and public revelry,—
 Slight shocks of young love-liking interspersed,—
 Whose transient pleasure mounted to the head
 And tingled through the veins.

It was after one of these revels that the crisis of his life was reached. He was on his way homeward in the early morning.

Magnificent
 The morning rose, in memorable pomp,
 Glorious as e'er I had beheld—in front,
 The sea lay laughing at a distance ; near
 The solid mountain shone, bright as the clouds,
 Grain-tinctured, drenched in empyrean light ;
 And in the meadows and the lower grounds
 Was all the sweetness of a common dawn—
 Dews, vapours, and the melody of birds,

And labourers going forth to till the fields.
 My heart was full; I made no vows, but vows
 Were there made for me; bond unknown to me
 Was given, that I should be, else sinning greatly,
 A dedicated spirit.

He may return to the University or be temporarily carried away by the revolutionary fervour of awakened France, but the bent of his mind is fixed, he must in the end return to nature. There is where he has vital contact, where he receives suggestions that can be built up into far-reaching, decisive judgments. In Book v he satirizes the external and mechanical acquisition of knowledge which he observed on return to the University, and contrasts with it the vital movement of his thought when vacation returned him to his father's home and to communion with woods and fields. Book vi contains a suggestive reference to the difference between the circumstances of his own development and those of his friend Coleridge.

I have thought
 Of thee, thy learning, gorgeous eloquence
 And all the strength and plumage of thy youth,
 Thy subtle speculations, toils abstruse
 Among the schoolmen and Platonic forms
 Of wild ideal pageantry.
 The self-created sustenance of a mind
 Debarred from Nature's living images—

As if Coleridge, with his finer intellectual insight and wider assimilative powers, did not enter a heaven that was shut to Wordsworth.

In his third Cambridge vacation he made, with a college friend, a fourteen weeks' tour of Switzerland and the Alps. Returning to Cambridge he took his degree in January, 1791, and went up to London, where he spent some months.

Book VII contains his impressions of London, and is a sufficient proof of his numbness to life on its great vanity-fair side. He has observed carefully and truthfully, but there are not here the gleams of inspiration that we find in his touches of aral description. He does not feel deeply enough. The very flatness of his style shows that the life of London streets was quite unvital to him :

A raree show is here
With children gathered round ; another street
Presents
Malays, Lascars, the Tartar, the Chinese
And negro ladies in white muslin gowns.

Equally unvital is his description of the theatre. His references to Parliament and Burke are better, but on the whole Wordsworth gained little from this contact with the active natic side of life. With what a different eye Chaucer, Shakspeare, Burns, Carlyle or Browning would have viewed the grand spectacle of metropolitan life—its extremes of poverty and wealth, its roar and rush, its vivacity and humour, its follies and passion, its manifold presentation of humanity in various stages of deviation from the one true law ! To Wordsworth, London was a “ monstrous ant-hill on the plain of a too busy world,” “ a press of self-destroying, transitory things,” an unvital subject seen with half-open eye. He kept his own centre firm and unshaken, however, rejecting what brought no sustenance to his spirit, but eagerly seizing upon all that kept alive his love of simple natural truth.

Book VIII is a retrospect of the influences which acted upon his childhood and youth up to his twenty-second year, prior to

mountains, where "'tis the shepherd's task the winter long to wait upon the storms ; of their approach sagacious, into sheltering coves to drive his flock."

From London he went to Wales, and from Wales to France, lured forth, as he tells us, by the dramatic spectacle of the Revolution. Books ix, x, xi record his impressions of a sojourn of some months in France. It would have been surprising if Wordsworth had not felt some of the enthusiasm of a new era which carried away many of the strongest and best spirits of the time. "Joy was it," he tells us, "to be alive, but to be young was very heaven." Yet, as he confesses, the scene had comparatively little interest for him. Born "in a poor district which yet retaineth more of ancient homeliness than any other nook of English ground," and in later years bred in "academic institutes where all stood upon equal ground, where distinction open lay to all that came and wealth and titles were in less esteem than talents, worth and prosperous industry," he felt it a democratic duty to sympathize with revolutionary France, and even thought that he might play a leading part in French politics. Yet "in honest truth," he says, "I looked for something that I could not find, affecting more emotion than I felt."

All things were to me
Loose and disjointed, and the affections left
Without a vital interest.

The sight of revolutionary Paris tossing like a ship in a tempest was less to him, he says, than the painted Magdalen of Le Brun. Still he did hope for very much from the revolutionary movement, and when, as he says, "Frenchmen be-

came oppressors in their turn, changed a war of self-defence to one of conquest, losing sight of all which they had struggled for," when the pressure of facts drove him into alienation from France, he was naturally very much distressed. For a time he haughtily refused to admit his disappointment, making an attempt to justify the action of France. A period of scepticism followed, in which he dragged

—All precepts, judgments, maxims, creeds,
Like culprits to the bar; calling the mind,
Suspiciously, to establish in plain day
Her titles and her honours; now believing,
Now disbelieving; endlessly perplexed
With impulse, motive, right and wrong, the ground
Of obligation, what the rule and whence
The sanction; till, demanding formal proof,
And seeking it in everything, I lost
All feeling of conviction.

But the bent had been too thoroughly fixed, the habit of finding strength and inspiration in nature too well established for this mood of mind to be permanent.

SERENITY.

He returned to England, and through his sister's influence came more and more to recognize his limitations, to see that his path lay not in the great world, but in the more calm and self-centred life of herdsmen and shepherds.

Above all
Were re-established now those watchful thoughts
Which seeing little worthy or sublime
In what historian's pen so much delights
To blazon—power and energy detached
From moral purpose—early tutored me
To look with feelings of fraternal love
Upon the unassuming things that hold
A silent station in this beauteous world.

A great deal too much has been said of this "defection to the

cause of Democracy." Shelley mildly deplores it in his sonnet *To Wordsworth*, while Browning's *Lost Leader* is supposed to be a sorrowful reference to the same thing. In truth there was no such defection. He was just as true a democrat with just as high a sense of the dignity of manhood after he heard with gratitude Burke

The majesty proclaim
Of institutes and laws, hallowed by time;
Declare the vital power of social ties
Endeared by custom; and with high disdain,
Exploding upstart theory, insist
Upon the allegiance to which men are born,

as he ever was, only he had come to place less value on violent and arbitrary movements for reform. His development was now complete. The friendship of Coleridge and the visit to Germany no doubt had some modifying influence, but perhaps the most important influence after those enumerated in the *Prelude* was the loss of his brother at sea, an event that made him think of nature in a new and terrible light, and strengthened his belief in compensation in another life.

II.—DEVELOPMENT OF STYLE.

The *Prelude* then is the record of the psychological development of the *potential* poet. It is the autobiography, in Professor Minto's words, not of the poet of nature, but of her worshipper and priest. It tells of the cherishing and strengthening of a native feeling for the forms, colours, harmonies and fragrances of nature until it became the dominant factor in the poet's life, but little or nothing of his ambition to express his feeling in verse. The potential poet may be silent, but the actual poet must add the power of

embodying his emotion in melodious words : in Wordsworth's inspired language,

Many are the poets that are sown
By nature, men endowed with highest gifts,
The vision and the faculty divine,
Yet wanting the accomplishment of verse.

The salient incidents in the struggle by which he acquired the accomplishment of verse, the new power of style in which to embody his new sense of things, are to be gathered from prefaces, prose notes, familiar intercourse and by comparing his earlier with his later productions.

While still a boy of fourteen his delight in the contemplation of nature was mingled with the ambition to express his feeling, and with the joy of having discovered a comparatively unworked field. A school exercise in verse done while at Hawkshead shows considerable familiarity with the form as well as the themes of the poets of his own time and country, as does also another production of about the same time, the sonnet *Written in very Early Youth*.

Calm is all nature as a resting wheel ;
The kine are couched upo' the dewy grass ;
The horse alone, seen dimly as I pass,
Is cropping audibly his later meal ;
Dark is the ground ; a slumber seems to steal
O'er vale and mountain, and the starless sky.
Now in this blank of things, a harmony
Home-felt, and home-created, comes to heal
That grief for which the senses will supply
Fresh food ; for only then when Memory
Is hushed, am I at rest. My Friends ! restrain
Those busy cares that would allay my pain ;
Oh ! leave me to myself, nor let me feel
The officious touch that makes me droop again.

Along with some of that morbid self-consciousness—Rousseauistic or Wertheristic—then prevalent but singularly

deficient in the later Wordsworth, some of the inversions so dear to the poets of the preceding school; much of their conventional diction and love of false ornament—kine, couched, dewy grass, later meal, busy cares, allay, officious touch, droop, etc.; and with a general woodenness of rhythmical movement there may be detected even in these lines a clear promise of the patient eye and ear, the absolute conscientiousness and the pure unegoistic expression of the later time—the horse is cropping audibly, calm is all nature, a harmony home-felt and home-created. The *Evening Walk*, written during his first Cambridge vacation to show that he could do something though he had not distinguished himself at the University, scarcely justifies the poet's neglect of the ordinary studies of the University. It is on the whole an echo of the style and movement of the artificial school.

In thoughtless gaiety I scoured the plain
And hope itself was all I knew of pain.

Yet even here there are several lines and passages such as

the herded deer
Shook the still twinkling tail,

which show a growing command of picturesque phrase and epithet.

The *Descriptive Sketches*, founded on observations made during a tour of the Continent in his last Cambridge vacation, and written therefore subsequently to his dedication of his powers, are strongly reminiscent of that 18th century diction and movement against which he was so soon to lead the revolt:

Were there below a spot of holy ground
Where from distress, a refuge might be found
And solitude prepare the soul for heaven,

Sure nature's God that spot to man had given
Where falls the purple morning far and wide
In flakes of light upon the mountain side.

Yet not unrecompensed the man shall roam
Who at the call of summer quits his home
And plods through some wide realm o'er vale and height
Though seeking only holiday delight,
At least not owning to himself an aim
To which the sage would give a prouder name,
No gains too cheaply earned his fancy cloy
Though every passing zephyr whispers joy.

Host of his welcome inn, the noontide bower,
To his spare meal he calls the passing poor,
He views the sun uplift his golden fire
Or sink with heart alive like Memnon's lyre.

O'er Gallia's wastes of corn, my footsteps led.

I greet the Chartreuse while I mourn thy doom
Whither is fled that Power whose frown
Awed sober Reason till she crouched in fear.

Here are all the recognized characteristics of the 18th century style—the rhyming couplet, regularly placed pauses and accents, pompous diction, conventional double epithets, rhetorical inversions, weak personifications and the constant habit of forced and superficial moralizing. But lines prophetic of the coming style, both its blunt realism and its penetrative power of epithet and phrase, are not infrequent—lines like

Haply that child in fearful doubt may gaze,
Passing his father's bones in future days,
Start at the reliques of that very thigh
On which so oft he prattled when a boy.

And lines also like the following :

Torrents shooting from the clear blue sky
 the chalets flat and ba
Suspended mid the quiet of the sky.

It was Wordsworth's conviction that in these rare lines lay the germs of a power of style adequate to his new power of

perception that prompted what his relations regarded as his wayward and unpromising aversion to work in any regular line. He was beginning to see that poetry was "his office upon earth." In this determination he was strengthened by his sister Dorothy who, with rare devotion, consecrated her life to her brother's service, while a series of financial windfalls relieved him of concern regarding material affairs. During the two years with his sister at Racedown, in Dorset, he wrote *The Borderers*, a tragedy, several satires in imitation of Juvenal and a few Spenserian stanzas. These half-hearted and very imperfectly successful attempts revealed to him at least his unfitness for satirical and dramatic composition, and were thus part of the means by which, under his sister's genial influence, he groped his way out of the labyrinth of 18th century formalism towards a simpler and sincerer style. What he needed now was the assurance of some friendly outside voice; and Coleridge opportunely supplied the needed stimulus. Coleridge had seen original poetic genius in *The Descriptive Sketches* and paid a visit to Wordsworth at Racedown. So stimulating was the companionship that Wordsworth removed to Alfoxden to be near Coleridge, and for the next twelve months the two original men were almost constant companions. Wordsworth's style rapidly matured. In response to Coleridge's quick and generous appreciation, ideas, the confused product of years of meditation, ranged themselves in clearer and more appropriate forms. The *Lyrical Ballads* were planned and published, Coleridge taking the supernatural themes, Wordsworth endeavouring to give the interest of romance to everyday topics. Coleridge's contributions were

the *Ancient Mariner* and three other pieces. Wordsworth's were more numerous, including *We are Seven*, *The Rev-erie of Poor Susan*, *Tintern Abbey*, *Simon Lee*, *The Thorn*, *The Idiot Boy*, *The Last of the Flock*, and *Goody Blake*; and reflecting all the higher qualities of Wordsworth's style. The critics, blinded by their admiration for what was then called elevation of style, passed over such lines as

that blessed mood
In which the burthen and the mystery,
In which the heavy and the weary weight
Of all this unintelligible world
Is lightened.

or

I have learned
To look on nature not as in the hour
Of thoughtless youth, but hearing often-times
The still sad music of humanity.

and derisively seized on lines like

Poor Susan moans, poor Susan groans.
"As sure as there's a moon in heaven,"
Cries Betty, "he'll be back again,
They'll both be here—'tis almost ten—
Both will be here before eleven."
Poor Susan moans, poor Susan groans,
The clock gives warning for eleven.

The public, however, seems to have been more appreciative, for a second edition was called for in 1800. This volume contained several new poems—*Ruth*, *Three Years She Grew*, *A Poet's Epitaph*, *Michael*, *Lucy Gray*, *Hart-Leap Well*, *The Two Brothers*—and was accompanied by the famous Preface defining the true theory of poetic diction which so infuriated the critics. The poet had at length acquired the courage of his convictions and did not hesitate to characterize the style of

Pope and his followers as stilted and artificial—a glare and glitter of a perpetual yet broken and heterogeneous imagery.

In stating his own theory of poetic diction, he at first, like most reformers, took up an extreme position, defining the true poetic style as the language of men in a vivid state of sensation, and adding that in the language of peasants was to be found the most spontaneous expression of the feelings and therefore the most suitable language for poetry. Feeling that passages like

I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts ; a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns
And the round ocean and the living air
And the blue sky and in the mind of man,

far transcended the capacity of rustic speech, he rejected this part of his definition, substituting therefor the statement that the language of poetry did not differ from that of good prose. Wordsworth's fumbling with the definition of poetic style was early seized for criticism at the time and has provoked much learned discussion since. Its real significance was the difficulty of defining the new style. Wordsworth's meaning was perfectly clear and perfectly true to any one whose eyes were not blinded by prejudice. The language of poetry should be simpler, he meant, and more sincere. And nobly did his own practice enforce this truth. Many of his early poems, it is true, are marred by the influence of his clumsily stated theory of poetic diction. The *Last of the Flock*, for example, well illustrates the garrulous diction and puerile diction, the simple-ness rather than simplicity of style into which he was some-

times betrayed in the attempt to write down to the level of rustic speech :

In distant countries have I been
And yet I have not often seen
A healthy man, a man full grown,
Weep in the public ways alone.
But such a case on English ground
And in the broad highway I met ;
Along the broad highway he came,
His cheeks with tears were wet,
Sturdy he seemed though he was sad
And in his arms a lamb he had.

But his most characteristic work is in a style of refined simplicity. As the object which he proposed to himself in his work as a whole was "to give the charm of novelty to things of every day." So in his style his aim was to show the possibilities of beauty in common verse forms and common language. In his hands the ballad stanza lost its rude jingle and gained sweetness and delicacy without passing into a loftier or more majestic rhythm than was demanded by the thoughts. Compare the monotony of stress, the fixed position of pause and accent, the absence of pitch and quantity in

Then all the maids of Islington
Went forth to sport and play,
All but the bayliffe's daughter dear,
She secretly stole away :

with the varying stress and position of accent, the shifting of pauses and the subtle employment of pitch and quantity in
Lucy Gray :

No mate, no comrade, Lucy knew
She dwelt on a wide moor,
The sweetest thing that ever grew
Beside a human door.

His diction similarly is characterized by the power of using

old and homely words in such a way as to develop their utmost latent significances. In the third line in the stanza from *Lucy Gray* above, for example, every word is in everyday use, and yet how beautifully suggestive is the use of each in this connection. Browning in *Abt Vogler* makes the superiority of music to the other arts lie in the subtle employment of common sounds :

I know not if save in this (music) such gift be allowed to man
That out of three sounds he frame not a fourth sound but a star.
Consider it well ; each tone of our scale is naught.
It is everywhere in the world—loud, soft and all is said.
Give it to me to use ! I mix it with two in my thought
And there ! Ye have heard and seen, consider and bow the head.

Poetry has this power, too, and nobly has Wordsworth's poetry displayed it in the *Cuckoo* :

Though babbling only to the vale
Of sunshine and of flowers,
Thou bringest unto me a tale
Of visionary hours.

in the *Solitary Reaper* :

Alone she cuts and binds the grain,
And sings a melancholy strain ;
Oh, listen for the vale profound
Is overflowing with the sound.

and in hundreds of other lines and passages.

In another department the interpretation of the higher philosophic or religious consciousness of which Wordsworth was also a thorough master, refined simplicity is equally the characteristic of his style. If we wanted a line to express those transitory gleams of spirit which visit us in our higher moments or to indicate or explain the temper of mind, the kind of intellectual insight constituting true culture, where could we get them more readily than in Wordsworth.

Thoughts that lie too deep for tears
 Something far more deeply interfused
 The harvest of a quiet eye
 The gods approve
 The depth and not the tumult of the soul
 From low to high doth dissolution climb,
 And sinks from high to low, along a scale
 Of awful notes whose concord shall not fail :
 A musical but melancholy chime,
 Which they can hear who meddle not with crime,
 Nor avarice nor over-anxious care.
 Truth fails not : but her outward forms that bear
 The largest date do melt like frosty rime.

It is true that the bulk of Wordsworth's work does not exhibit so high a level of style. After his ten most inspired years (1800-1810) Wordsworth fell more and more into prosiness. Two causes are assignable for this: (1) his almost comical inability to distinguish - the result of his secluded life,—between genuine inspiration and commonplace; and (2) the gradual conventionalizing of his diction into a language which he could use concerning nature, whether or not he felt the divine flame. But in those ten years his work had been done; he recalled men to the true source of power—contact with things; he showed that language should be the garment of the thought and that force of expression came from contact with life, and he left us a body of poetry that sets him high in the rank of those who have widened the consciousness of men.

III.—HIS VIEW OF LIFE.

To inquire after a poet's view of life is in certain quarters to ignore a fundamental distinction between poetry on the one hand and science and philosophy on the other. Beauty it will

he said is the object of poetry; truth, of philosophy and science; and, to demand consistency of thought from the poet, is as absurd as to expect the searcher after truth to hamper himself with the trammels of art. But we have the authority of one of the greatest poets for the view that beauty and truth are inseparable. There can be no beauty that is not based upon truth and any truth vividly perceived may shape itself into beautiful forms of art. The topics of poetry are the same facts as those of science and philosophy, only, to the poet these facts come home so as to touch him to the quick, to pierce him with more than usual vividness, and to produce a glow of emotion. In the rapt unreasoned utterances of the poet there must therefore lie a kernel of thought, and it becomes necessary at a certain point in our study of his work to formulate his views on nature, man and God.

Wordsworth is, first and foremost, inspired by the great objective world about him, the unobtrusive aspects of nature as well as the more sublime. He does not, like Scott, Shelley or Byron, choose by preference grandiose objects, a mountain, a storm, a sweep of landscape, or the rolling ocean. His treatment of nature differs in minuteness and delicacy, in absolute conscientiousness and in penetrative insight, from that of other poets, prior or contemporary. Chaucer is keenly sensitive to the common sights of earth and sky, and describes them with the freshness of a feeling heart and a clear eye. His work will always, therefore, be of power to win men back from artificial and conventional modes of life

And smale fowles maken melodie
That slegen all the night with open eye
So priketh him nature in her corage.

But he gives us scarcely a hint of the existence of "something far more deeply interfused" upon which all nature and human life repose. Shakspeare's imagination irradiates things with a beauty rarely found in any other writer.

I know a bank where the wild thyme blows,
Where oxlips and the nodding violet grows,
Quite over-canopied with lush woodbine,
With sweet musk roses and with eglantine.

At white heat it carries him fast and far, fusing images the most dissimilar into an harmonious whole,

Like to the lark at break of day arising
Sings hymns at Heaven's gate.

But his interpretation of nature at the highest is only the old Pythagorean notion of a harmony of the spheres :

There's not the smallest orb of those thou seest
But in his motion like an angel sing
Still choiring to the young-eyed cherubim.

Sidney, Herrick and the minor Elizabethan poets make nature a peg on which to hang their reflections on the shortness of life or the vanity of human wishes, as in Herrick's *Daffodils*.

Fair Daffodils we weep to see
You haste away so soon.
We have short time to stay as you,
We have as short a spring.

Milton rarely has his eye directly on nature, or if he fixes one eye on the object the other is scanning the pages of the Greek and Latin classics for mythological references and allusions. The 18th century poets never looked at nature at

all, but were perpetually occupied with the glare and glitter of false ornament :

The moon, refulgent lamp of night.

Byron, waging a fierce warfare against the conventions and social anomalies of his own day, treats nature magnificently, indeed, but never without tincturing his description with his own restless pride and melancholy egoism, preferring therefore, the fiercer and wilder aspects of nature. The very rhythm of his well-known poem, *The Ocean*, is instinct with fierce restlessness and a gloomy pride. Shelley's imagination, teeming with vast and vague pantheistic conceptions, yields us fine studies of the presence of spirit in the great movements of the universe :

The one remains, the many change and pass,
Heaven's light for ever shines, earth's shadows fly,
Life, like a dome of many-coloured glass,
Stains the bright radiance of eternity
Until death trample it to fragments.

But he also is egoistic, too impatient of details to render nature with absolute fidelity. Scott has a fine sense of form and colour, of the surface glow and movement of nature :

The wandering eye could o'er it go,
And mark the distant city glow
With gloomy splendour red;
Far on the smoke-wreaths, huge and slow,
That round her sable turrets flow,
The morning beams were shed,
And tinged them with a lustre proud,
Like that which streaks a thunder-cloud.

Another good example of Scott's power in this way is his description in the *Lady of the Lake* of Loch Katrine and its surrounding mountains. The work is definite, objective, pic-

turesque, full of rich colouring. He does not distort nature with his own subjective states. He has everywhere a fine healthy joy in what he sees. But there is scarcely a line in all his work to indicate a very profound sense of the deeper spiritual significance of things. At most he is impressed by the historic associations of what he observes. Coleridge's observation of nature comes nearest to Wordsworth's, but absorbed in his metaphysical speculations, his Kantian and Fichtean idealisms, Coleridge inclines to make nature a mere reflection of man ;

O Lady, we receive but what we give,
And in our life alone doth nature live,
Ours is her wedding garment, ours her shroud,

while Wordsworth looks to nature for the type and pattern of what human life should be. Wordsworth alone among poets—Turner in landscape painting showing a similar power of interpretation—has the gift of feeling deeply and rendering accurately the beauty of the objective world in all its aspects. He does not require a grandiose subject like Byron, Scott or Shelley, but is as happily inspired by a bed of daffodils as by “some tall cliff that is the eagle's birth-place.” And with what absolute fidelity, how free from fretful egoisms, is his rendering of what he sees. His feeling for sky and mountains and solitary places impresses us with its absolute rightness as what we should all feel if we could lay aside our vanities, still the noisy tumult of our souls, and tune our ear to the subtler harmonies of things. So patiently had he tuned his ear to this finer music, so thoroughly trained his eye to catch the faintest gleam of spirit in the ordinary things around him, so

emptied himself of himself that nature might enter and make him her oracle, that he has succeeded beyond any other poet, ancient or modern, in the imaginative content of single lines or short passages, in the power of condensing the spirit of a place into few words. How finely, for example, the calm, impersonal, august presence of nature in the sky is given in the line

The silence that is in the starry sky—

the silence of the solitary hills in

The sleep that is among the lonely hills—

or the solitude of the lonely mountain tarn in the following short stanza :

There sometimes doth a leaping fish
Send through the tarn a lonely cheer.
The crags repeat the raven's croak
In symphony austere.

The feeling that underlies and prompts this minute and delicate, patient and unselfish and profoundly penetrative observation—the belief in a calm, august presence, a spirit in itself invisible, but speaking through visible things to the mind and spirit of man, stilling his fretful egotism, rousing him from lassitude and weariness, and filling his mind with noble and majestic thoughts, a spirit calm, rational and tender, “with a deep and reverential care for the creatures whom he loves”—is a form of that 19th century pantheism which has done so much to remedy old religious conceptions.

It is everywhere implicit in his best descriptive work, and comes explicitly to the surface in many lines and passages :

The being that is in the clouds and air,
That is in the green leaves among the groves,
Maintains a deep and reverential care

For the unoffending creatures whom he loves.

.
I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts: a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns
And the round ocean and the living air,
And the blue sky and in the mind of man,
A motion and a spirit that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things.

In the interpretation of human life Wordsworth is less successful, the object of poetry being what Milton took it to be—to justify the ways of God to man. Wordsworth has been praised for his studies of peasant life and his *Simon Lee*, *Michael*, *Leech-Gatherer* and *Benjamin*, *The Wagoner*, are characterized by many competent critics as touchingly real. It is true they have a vitality that is lacking in the conventional Arcadian peasant of Pope's pastorals and their dumb, inexpressive lives, their patience and humility inbred by generations of hopeless toil, are profoundly pathetic. Indeed Wordsworth's studies of peasant types are a most powerful arraignment of our present unjust social system, and therefore the most effective answer to those who charge him with "defection to democracy." But are they true? Is there enough compensation? Millet's peasants are toil-worn, but in their defeatured faces may be traced industry, honesty and comparative contentment. In Burns' *Cottar's Saturday Night* the toil and hardship of the over-worked peasant is relieved by the joys of domestic affection and religious hope; in the *Jolly Beggars*, by the liveliness, the quick joyous pulse of life and activity, and the mad humours of the characters. Words-

worth, through defect of dramatic faculty, is unable to do this. In the *Highland Girl* there is a certain pastoral beauty of youth and environment, whose transitory nature, however, we are not suffered to forget. In *Benjamin, The Wagoner*, the hard routine of toil is relieved by a careless jollity very rare in Wordsworth's characters. The austerity of Michael's character is softened a little by a deep natural piety, deepened and refined by sympathetic intercourse with the sublimer scenes of nature. Yet even with a mind and character originally of no little strength, full and free development is impossible. Michael's life is too austere, almost depressed by a long incessant struggle with toil. The Wanderer in the *Excursion* is, even more than Michael, an exceptional type. His occupation carries him into varied intercourse with man and he attains to some degree of harmonious development, taking a joyous and intelligent interest in all he sees and capable of sympathetic understanding of nature and human life. But he is a mere ideal, and one comes away from Wordsworth's pictures of peasant life impressed with the pathos, the sadness and cruelty, with

the burthen and the mystery
Of all this unintelligible world.

In another field—the interpretation of our higher meditative moments—Wordsworth is once more unique. In thousands of quotable lines he has enriched humanity with the product of his many silent wrestlings of thought. Here we are embarrassed by riches. The difficulty is to know not what to quote, but what to omit. To conclude this section take

From low to high doth dissolution climb,
And sink from high to low, along a scale

Of awful notes whose concord shall not fall :
A musical but melancholy chime,
Which they can hear who meddle not with crime,
Nor avarice nor over-anxious care.
Truth fails not : but her outward forms that bear
The largest date do melt like frosty rime,
That in the morning whitened hill and plain,
And is no more.

Little will require to be added concerning Wordsworth's idea of God. When the rationalism of the 18th century, its love of clear thinking and its hatred of mysticism had destroyed all vital belief in the existence of God, Wordsworth recalled men to deity immanent in the calm and orderly existence about them. His conception of the tender relation in which the divine spirit stood to the spirit of man was brought into contact with his observation of the hardships of peasant life ; the belief in immortality emerged ; a life of toil so completely unrelieved as those to which reference has been made finding compensation hereafter. This, too, is his solution, as in the *Education of Nature*, of all problems arising from nature's apparent prodigality.

SELECTIONS FROM WORDSWORTH.

THE EDUCATION OF NATURE.

Three years she grew in sun and shower ;
Then Nature said, 'A lovelier flower
On earth was never sown :
This child I to myself will take ;
She shall be mine, and I will make
A lady of my own. 5

'Myself will to my darling be
Both law and impulse : and with me
The girl, in rock and plain,
In earth and heaven, in glade and bower, 10
Shall feel an overseeing power
To kindle or restrain.

'She shall be sportive as the fawn
That wild with glee across the lawn
Or up the mountain springs ; 15
And her's shall be the breathing balm,
And her's the silence and the calm
Of mute insensate things.

'The floating clouds their state shall lend
To her ; for her the willow bend ; 20
Nor shall she fail to see
Even in the motions of the storm
Grace that shall mould the maiden's form
By silent sympathy.

- 25 But lately, one rough day, this flower I past,
And recognized it, though an alter'd form, 10
Now standing forth an offering to the blast,
And buffeted at will by rain and storm.
- 30 I stopp'd and said, with inly-mutter'd voice,
"It doth not love the shower, nor seek the cold ;
This neither is its courage nor its choice, 15
But its necessity in being old.
- 35 "The sunshine may not cheer it, nor the dew ;
It cannot help itself in its decay ;
Stiff in its members, wither'd, changed of hue."
And, in my spleen, I smiled that it was gray. 20
- To be a prodigal's favourite—then, worse truth,
A miser's pensioner--behold our lot !
40 O Man ! that from thy fair and shining youth
Age might but take the things Youth needed not !

TO THE SKYLARK.

Ethereal minstrel ! pilgrim of the sky !
Dost thou despise the earth where cares abound
Or, while the wings aspire, are heart and eye
Both with thy nest upon the dewy ground ?
Thy nest which thou canst drop into at will, 5
Those quivering wings composed, that music still !

To the last point of vision, and beyond
Mount, daring warbler ! that love-prompted strain
(Twixt thee and thine a never-failing bond)

Thrills not the less the bosom of the plain : 10
 Yet might'st thou seem, proud privilege ! to sing
 All independent of the leafy Spring.

Leave to the nightingale her shady wood ;
 A privacy of glorious light is thine,
 Whence thou dost pour upon the world a flood 15
 Of harmony, with instinct more divine ;
 Type of the wise, who soar, but never roam ;
 True to the kindred points of Heaven and Home.

TO THE DAISY.

With little here to do or see
 Of things that in the great world be,
 Sweet Daisy ! oft I talk to thee
 For thou art worthy,
 Thou unassuming common-place 5
 Of Nature, with that homely face,
 And yet with something of a grace
 Which Love makes for thee !

Oft on the dappled turf at ease
 I sit and play with similes, 10
 Loose types of things through all degrees,
 Thoughts of thy raising ;
 And many a fond and idle name
 I give to thee, for praise or blame
 As is the humour of the game, 15
 While I am gazing.

- 10 A nun demure, of lowly port ;
 Or sprightly maiden, of Love's court,
 In thy simplicity the sport
 Of all temptations ; 20
- 15 A queen in crown of rubies drest ;
 A starveling in a scanty vest ;
 Are all, as seems to suit thee best,
 Thy appellations.
- A little Cyclops, with one eye 25
 Staring to threaten and defy,
 That thought comes next— and instantly
 The freak is over,
 The shape will vanish, and behold !
 A silver shield with boss of gold 30
 That spreads itself, some fairy bold
 In fight to cover.
- I see thee glittering from afar—
 And then thou art a pretty star,
 Not quite so fair as many are 35
 In heaven above thee !
- 5 Yet like a star, with glittering crest,
 Self-poised in air thou seem'st to rest ;—
 May peace come never to his nest
 Who shall reprove thee ! 40
- 10 Sweet Flower ! for by that name at last
 When all my reveries are past
 I call thee, and to that cleave fast,
 Sweet silent Creature !
 That breath'st with me in sun and air, 45
 Do thou, as thou art wont, repair
 My heart with gladness, and a share
 Of thy meek nature !
- 15

TO A DISTANT FRIEND.

Why art thou silent! Is thy love a plant
Of such weak fibre that the treacherous air
Of absence withers what was once so fair?
Is there no debt to pay, no boon to grant?

Yet have my thoughts for thee been vigilant, 5
Bound to thy service with unceasing care—
The mind's least generous wish a mendicant
For nought but what thy happiness could spare.

Speak!—though this soft warm heart, once free to hold
A thousand tender pleasures, thine and mine, 10
Be left more desolate, more dreary cold

Than a forsaken bird's-nest fill'd with snow
'Mid its own bush of leafless eglantine—
Speak, that my torturing doubts their end may know!

LONDON, 1802.

O Friend! I know not which way I must look
For comfort, being, as I am, opprest
To think that now our life is only drest
For show; mean handiwork of craftsman, cook,
Or groom!—We must run glittering like a brook 5
In the open sunshine, or we are unblest;
The wealthiest man among us is the best:
No grandeur now in Nature or in book

Delights us. Rapine, avarice, expense,
This is idolatry ; and these we adore :
Plain living and high thinking are no more :

10

The homely beauty of the good old cause
Is gone ; our peace, our fearful innocence,
And pure religion breathing household laws.

 THE SAME.

Milton ! thou shouldst be living at this hour :
England hath need of thee : she is a fen
Of stagnant waters : altar, sword, and pen,
Fireside, the heroic wealth of hall and bower,

Have forfeited their ancient English dower
Of inward happiness. We are selfish men :
Oh ! raise us up, return to us again ;
And give us manners, virtue, freedom, power.

5

Thy soul was like a Star, and dwelt apart :
Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like the sea,
Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free ;

10

So didst thou travel on life's common way
In cheerful godliness ; and yet thy heart
The lowliest duties on herself did lay.

TO SLEEP.

A flock of sheep that leisurely pass by
 One after one ; the sound of rain, and bees
 Murmuring ; the fall of rivers, winds and seas,
 Smooth fields, white sheets of water, and pure sky ;

I've thought of all by turns, and still I lie 5
 Sleepless ; and soon the small birds' melodies
 Must hear, first utter'd from my orchard trees,
 And the first cuckoo's melancholy cry.

Even thus last night, and two nights more I lay,
 And could not win thee, Sleep ! by any stealth : 10
 So do not let me wear to-night away :

Without Thee what is all the morning's wealth ?
 Come, bless'd barrier between day and day,
 Dear mother of fresh thoughts and joyous health !

WITHIN KING'S COLLEGE CHAPEL, CAMBRIDGE.

Tax not the royal Saint with vain expense,
 With ill-match'd aims the Architect who plann'd
 (Albeit labouring for a scanty band
 Of white-robed Scholars only) this immense

And glorious work of fine intelligence ! 5
 —Give all thou canst ; high Heaven rejects the lore
 Of nicely-calculated less or more :—
 So deem'd the man who fashion'd for the sense

These lofty pillars, spread that branching roof
Self-poised, and scoop'd into ten thousand cells
Where light and shade repose, where music dwells

10

Lingering and wandering on as loth to die—
Like thoughts whose very sweetness yieldeth proof
That they were born for immortality.

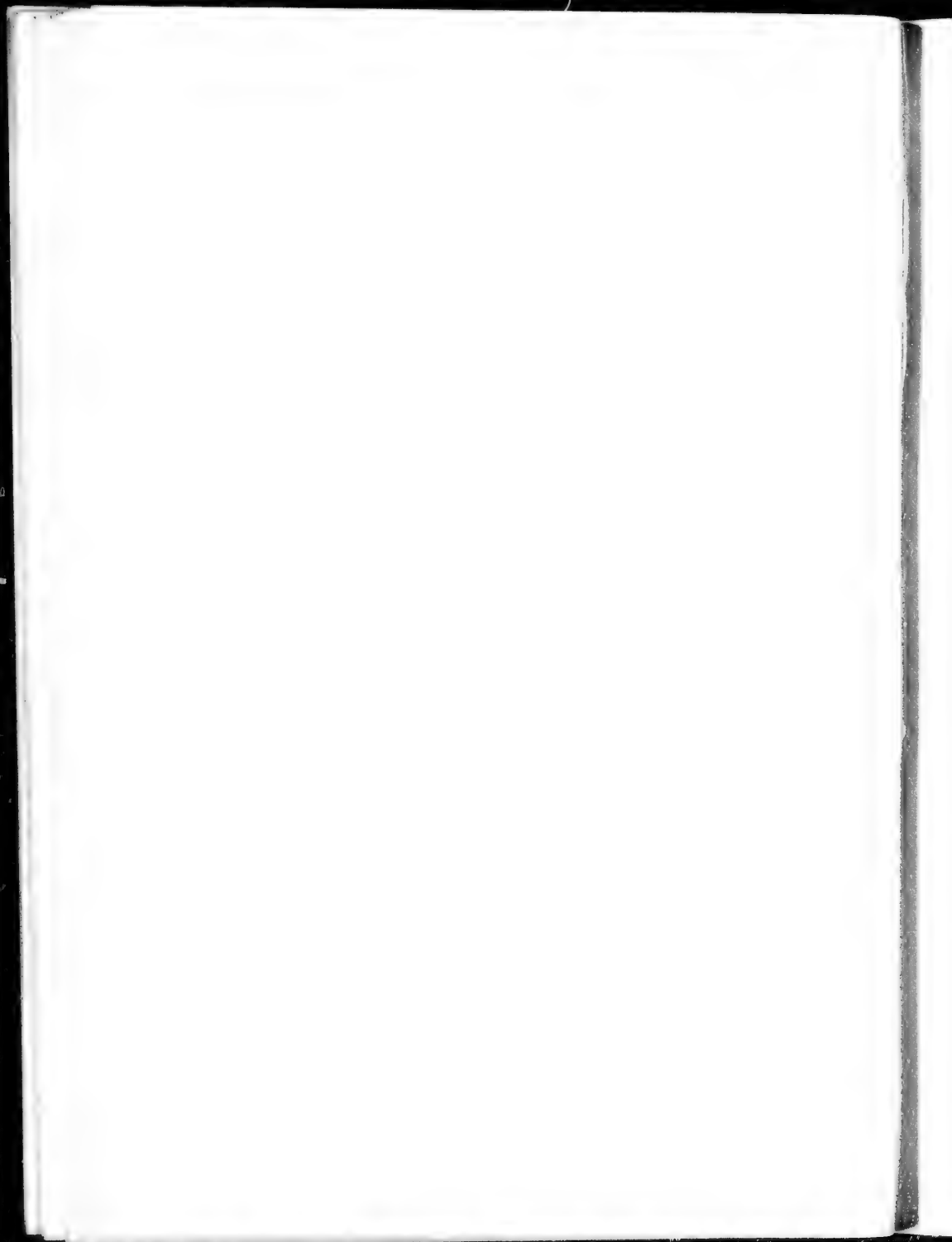


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IDGE.

5



NOTES ON WORDSWORTH.

THE EDUCATION OF NATURE.

This poem, written in 1799, and published in 1800 in the second edition of the *Lyrical Ballads*, is typically Wordsworthian. "Whoever," says De Quincey, "looks searchingly into Wordsworth's characteristic genius will see that he does not willingly deal with a passion in its direct aspect or presenting a modified contour, but in forms more complex and oblique, and when passing under the shadow of some secondary passion." In *The Eltunain* Matthew's joy that wells up from constitutional sources, and cannot, therefore, cease to sparkle, is touched and overgloomed by memories of sorrow. In *We Are Seven*, the little cottage girl, in her fulness of life, incapable of understanding the meaning of death, is brought under the reflex shadows of the grave. In *The Education of Nature* we have similarly the major and the minor chords harmoniously blended, enthusiastic delight in a vision of perfect womanliness ripening under simple natural conditions, passing into regret that the vision should have been so fleeting and transient, and that again merging in the thought of the value of memory as preserving for us shapes of beauty that have vanished from the world of appearance, while behind all is the hope that the issues of this life have their fulfilment in a life to come. With this complexity there is no obscurity, no over-refinement of thought or feeling such as we frequently find in Tennyson. And the form and evolution of the poem are no less sincere and inevitable. In the first stanza it is suggested that there is something more than environment in

the growth of a beautiful character. Nature did not make this soul; she only brought to flower a seed that had acquired its possibilities of growth elsewhere. The thought adumbrated in this stanza is the same as that more directly expressed in the great Ode :

The soul that rises with us, our life's star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar.

The characteristics of perfect womanliness and the influences by which it is developed are given in the next five stanzas. In the concluding stanza, the minor chord, latent in all the shorter cadences, for the first time distinctly emerges. This vision of perfect loveliness has scarcely appeared before it vanishes from our world of phenomena and we are left with only the memory of what it was. The metrical unity of the poem is no less remarkable. There is a deep rhythmical necessity in the combination of two iambic tetrameters and a trimeter. How well, for example, the complex emotional quality of the poem is suggested by the cadence of the first three lines of the opening stanza or by the last half of the concluding stanza !

It is interesting to compare this poem with Shelley's solution of a somewhat similar problem in the *Sensitive Plant*. In Shelley's sweeping pantheistic conception little or no account is taken of individual sorrow. If we mourn the loss of some one good and beautiful we are told that death is a mockery, that our loved one has merely become one with nature, is a presence still to be loved and known, spreading itself where'er that power may move which has withdrawn his being to its own, that our human organs of perception only are at fault, that 'tis we, 'tis ours are changed, not they that are gone. Wordsworth's meaning is therefore simpler, more sincere, more universally intelligible. Of one truth he at least is certain, that the dead and the distant, while we long for them

and mourn for them, are as truly present as the floor we stand on, while his suggested solution of the opposition between divine purpose and human wishes in a life beyond the grave, resting as it is made to rest upon a necessity of nature, the law one might say of the conservation of spiritual energy, is less militant and dogmatic than either Shelley or Browning's treatment of the same problem.

This poem should be read in conjunction with *Ruth*, *Lucy Gray*, *We Are Seven*, *The Influence of Natural Objects* and *She Dwelt Among the Untrodden Ways*.

1. **Three years.** Favourite ballad number.

3. **Sown.** Compare "Here scattered like a random seed" in *The Highland Girl*.

6. **Lady.** True culture is natural, not artificial. Compare with the poet's views of the moral and spiritual grandeur of nature's teaching as expressed in *The Influence of Natural Objects*.

8. **Law and Impulse.** A sense of order as well as quick and eager visitings of thought and feeling.

11. **feel.** Be implicitly rather than distinctly conscious of an august presence. Ruskin, in *Modern Painters*, says: "I think we cannot doubt of one main conclusion, that though the absence of a love of nature is not an assured condemnation, its presence is an invariable sign of goodness."

12. **To kindle and restrain.** Compare "law and impulse."

13. Nature's influences add to the human character a cheerful, buoyant liveliness. Compare *Ruth*:

And when he chose to sport and play,
No dolphin ever was so gay
Upon the tropic sea.

16. **breathing balm.** "Breathing"—an active participle used passively. A sweet restorative influence shall go forth as an emanation from her presence.

16, 18. In Wordsworth's conception of nature's influence in moulding the human spirit, no thought is so constantly active as that of the calming and soothing power of her great 'silence.'

Compare—from the *Song at the Feast of Brougham Castle*:

Love had he found in huts where poor men lie;
His daily teachers had been woods and rills,
The silence that is in the starry sky,
The sleep that is among the lonely hills.

24. **silent sympathy.** Unconscious adjustment to her environment.

26. **lean her ear.** To catch the subtle, almost inaudible tones of nature. Compare "the harvest of a quiet eye."

27. **secret place.** Compare with "The sleep that is among the lonely hills," in quotation 16, 18.

31. Wordsworth not only does not believe in the physical or moral efficiency of pain, but seems to deny the possibility of its presence with the normal child amid the glories of nature. Joy, 'genial joy,' is the inherited 'coronal' of youth:

Meadow, grove, and stream,
The earth and every common sight
To me did seem
Apparelled in celestial light,
The glory and the freshness of a dream.

37. **The work was done.** Lucy's education was completed. Hers was now

A countenance in which did meet
Sweet records, promises as sweet.

41, 42. Compare with Browning's *Abt Vogler*:

Never to be again! But many more of the kind
As good, nay, better perchance; is this your comfort to me?
To me who must be saved because I cling with my mind
To the same, same self, same love, same God: ay, what was, shall be.

Wordsworth frequently refers to the restorative power of the memory when time and imaginative processes have added an ideal halo to an object or a scene. Compare with lines in *The Highland Girl*, *The Rev-erie of Poor Susan*, *Tintern Abbey*, *Yarrow Visited*, *The Cuckoo*, *Memory*, etc.

A LESSON, 1804.

There was no limit to the range and extent of Wordsworth's sympathies in nature. He is quite as much at home in the presence of the simplest flower as amid the grandest and most elemental forces of his own rocky Cumberlandshire. All forms of nature's shaping are pervaded by the one eternal spirit, and the true poet of nature, seeing, as he must, into the very life of things, is just so much a great poet in proportion as he succeeds in catching and depicting the various moods of that spirit. Wordsworth looks upon the Celandine, and how noble and highly serious is the spiritual truth revealed in the life of this common-place object! In its vigorous, buoyant youth, the Celandine has found within itself powers and energies sufficient for self-protection; in age, with these powers lost or destroyed, it is "buffeted at will" by all the fiercer forces of the elements. Even so, man,—in youth, the favourite of a lavish mother, Nature,—becomes in age, with early joys and enthusiasms, powers and faculties dissipated or destroyed, the pensioner upon whom niggardly she bestows her blessings.

We catch in this poem what is rare in Wordsworth—a despondent note: in its issues, life, with its development, brings hopelessness. Man must lose, lose irrevocably and perhaps through his own lavishness, what would cheer and support him in his last years. A different note pervades his stronger work. Much of the joy and delight of youth must fade; the glory must pass away from the earth, but compensation there is in

That which should accompany old age,
As honour, love, obedience, troops of friends,

and in the memory of

those affections.
Those shadowy recollections,

Which be they what they may,
Are yet the fountain light of all our day,
Are yet a master light of all our seeing :

and

In the primal sympathy
Which having been must ever be,
In the soothing thoughts that spring
Out of human suffering,
In the faith that looks through death,
In years that bring the philosophic mind

Back of the poet's teaching in all his works is the belief that the ideal life is such an existence as will fit man for meeting the wasting of his powers with age and such an existence as will train him to listen, to ponder and hold dear those

Echoes from beyond the grave,
Recognized intelligence !

He, indeed, is truly wise who

Mourns less for what age takes away
Than what she leaves behind.

This poem, not so short and compact, has yet much of the spirit of one of Wordsworth's sonnets. One cannot but note the graver, more serious and more severe dignity of the verse movements as compared with the *Education of Nature*.

As showing the range and warmth of Wordsworth's sympathies in the plant and flower world, it would be well to read the poems on the *Daisy*, those on the *Celandine*, the *Yew Trees*, *The Daffodils*, *The Primrose*, etc., whilst, as touching upon the same problems of life, the *Ode on the Intimations* and *The Fountain* might be examined.

1. Lesser celandine. A common British plant with yellow flowers, blossoming early in spring. Known as a swallow-wort.

13. Why "inly-muttered" ?

20. in my spleen. Account for this mood on the part of the author.

23, 24. Compare with the verses quoted in the preceding remarks :

And yet the wiser mind
Mourns less for what age, etc.

THE SKYLARK, 1825.

Some critics have objected to what they call the too obviously didactic purpose of this poem. The last two lines, it is said, are artistically inharmonious; their appearance converts the poem into a moral homily, and sicklies o'er its cheerful objectivity with the pale cast of subjective thought; instead of a disinterested study of nature we have the skylark used as a peg upon which to hang a somewhat prosy moral. To charge a poet with being didactic is, however, no real objection. All poetry is didactic—that is, every poem has its organizing idea, and the degree of emotion that idea has aroused in the poet is the measure of the literary value of his production. Catch that idea and his work is a magnificent unity: miss it, or mistake some more limited conception for the main thought, and more or less of the poem is certain to escape into contingency.

Now Wordsworth never looks upon nature as a whole, or any part of nature, as having an existence independent of man's life. In all his later and best work, at any rate, he has

• learned
To look on nature not as in the hour
Of thoughtless youth; but hearing oftentimes
The still sad music of humanity.

He has felt the presence of one pervading spirit in the light of which all differences between man and the lower creation or the objective world are merely accidental. He penetrates below this external husk of difference and sees the fundamental unity of all life and the laws upon which the highest fruition depends.

The skylark in its way illustrates the same truth that in a higher form Wordsworth sees exemplified in Milton's life:

Thy soul was like a star, and dwelt apart:
Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like the sea,

Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free,
 and yet thy heart
 The lowliest duties on herself did lay.

The truth that nobility and elevation of life is not to be sought in the rejection of all mundane interests, but that here and now we may realize the higher life if we will; that not in Utopian freedom from conditions, but by acting in harmony with the social and moral order in which we are placed can we find happiness. The lower creation are instinctively in harmony with their environment. Man, in virtue of his higher consciousness and power of choice, is able to forsake the path of his welfare. But the harmony which thought disturbs, thought can restore. Wordsworth's moral is therefore different from that of Shelley in his ode, *To the Skylark*. Shelley attributes our relative unhappiness to our self-consciousness:

We look before and after
 And pine for what is not.

Wordsworth sees in self-consciousness the possibility of a higher, because conscious, harmony than the instinctive joyousness of the skylark, though the former when attained will, like the latter, be the result of healthy spontaneous action.

This poem, written in 1825, might be profitably compared with an earlier lyric upon the skylark, written in 1805. Years have deepened and intensified the poet's views of human life. In both poems there is enthusiastic mention of the singing and soaring of the bird, but whilst in the earlier poem Wordsworth meets the petty cares and miseries of the real world by charm and elevation of fancy, in the later, to his ear, truer, and more serious has become "the still sad music of humanity."

As *The Lesson* suggested an examination of other poems of Wordsworth, so should the *Skylark* lead to a careful reading of the *Cuckoo* poems, and of *The Green Linnet*. The different

manners of Keats, Shelley and Wordsworth might be studied in their "bird" poetry.

1. **Ethereal minstrel.** Compare with Shelley's description of the lark's song.

Pilgrim of the sky. Compare Shakspeare :

Like to the lark at break of day arising
From sullen earth sings hymns at heaven's gate.

2. **Despise.**—*despicio*, to look down upon, the figurative force of the word being here specially appropriate.

Where cares abound. The ignobility and anxiety of life being productive in certain minds of cynicism and indifference.

3. **aspire.** Compare "despise."

6. Develop the contrast implied in "quivering" and "composed," also that in "that music," "still."

Note the relation in thought of the last two lines in each stanza to the other lines of the same stanza.

7. **last point of vision.** What is meant?

8. **Daring warbler.** What is the purpose of the antithesis "daring warbler"?

13. Keats in his *Ode to the Nightingale* thus describes the bird's appearance and habits :

Thou light-winged Dryad of the trees,
In some melodious plot
Of beechen green and shadows numberless,
Singest of summer in full-throated ease,

and in bidding it adieu :

Thy plaintive anthem fades
Past the near meadows, over the still stream,
Up the hill-side ; and now 'tis buried deep
In the next valley-glades.

Milton, in the *Il Penseroso* :

Sweet bird, that shun'st the noise of folly,
Most musical, most melancholy.

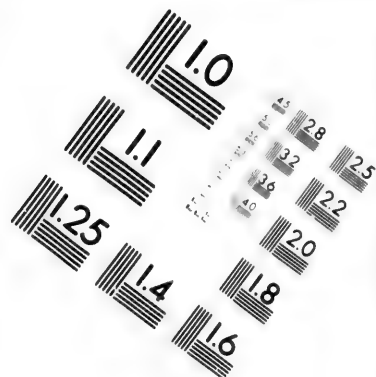
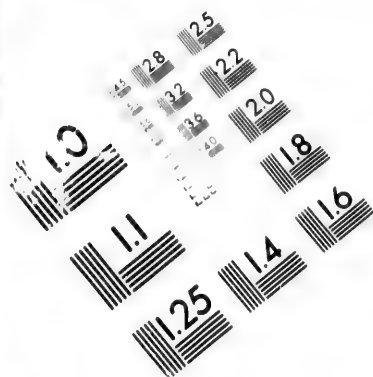
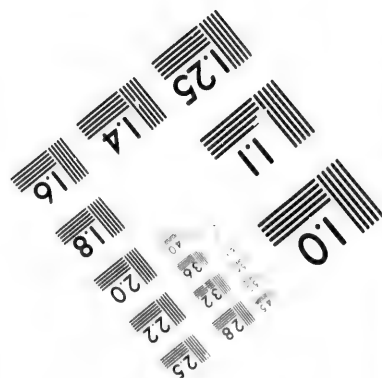
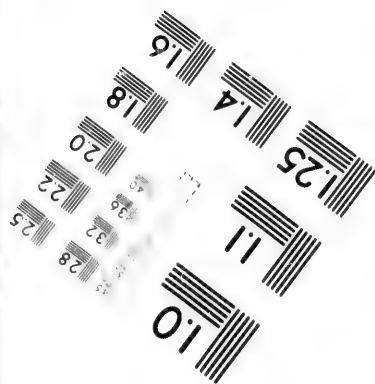
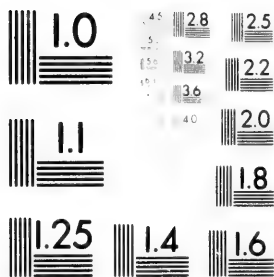


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What is the characteristic note of the nightingale? What sort of poetry does the nightingale's song represent? The skylark's? Compare the suggested thought of this line (13) with Schiller's saying that the object of all great art is dedicated to joy.

14. Personal isolation from the baser tendencies of man's thought and life is a natural, almost necessary condition of personal sublimity of soul and being. The human soul reaches its highest expression of joy and worship only when away from the world's fiercer tumults and in the glorious eye of heaven, but this isolation should imply no lack of sympathy with the "common way" of life and with its "lowliest duties."

TO THE DAISY, 1805.

Of this poem Ruskin says in *Modern Painters* that the first few stanzas are delicious examples of fancy regardant, and the final stanza one of heavenly imagination. "Observe," he goes on, "how spiritual, yet how wandering and playful the fancy is, and how far she flies from the matter in hand, never stopping to brood on the character of any of the images she summons, and yet for a moment truly seeing and believing in them all; while in the last stanza the imagination returns with its deep feeling to the heart of the flower and cleaves fast to that." The main thought of the poem in other words is in the last stanza, and that is the same simple yet profound truth as we have in the *Daffodils*.

Compare Wordsworth in his treatment of this subject, whether in this or in his other poems on the daisy, with Burns and Chaucer.

5. **commonplace.** On account of its prevalence.

9. **dappled turf.** With light and shade or with daisies?

Compare with a stanza from another of Wordsworth's poems to the daisy:

A hundred times, by rock or bower,
Ere thus I have lain couched an hour,
Have I derived from thy sweet power

Some apprehension ;
 Some steady love ; some brief delight ;
 Some memory that had taken flight ;
 Some chime of fancy, wrong or right ;
 Or stray invention.

11. Loose types. Wordsworth is aware of the fancifulness of his comparisons,—and yet, however “fond and idle” these fancies may be, something in the daisy’s appearance must suggest them. What?

25. Cyclops. A fabled giant mentioned by Homer, with one circular eye in the middle of the forehead.

31. faery. Another form of “fairy.”

33-40. Wherein does this stanza exemplify a marked feature in Wordsworth’s poetry—an inequality of thought or manner?

45. That breathest with me in sun and air. The keynote of Wordsworth’s philosophy of nature—the community among all parts of nature and their obedience in one form or another to the same law,—hence the restorative influence upon the human spirit.

THE SONNET.

Sonnet, from the Italian *sonetto*, literally a little sound, because originally recited to the accompaniment of a musical instrument, is a brief poetic form of fourteen rhymed verses arranged in a certain regular order. There are four principal forms :

(1). Shakspearean or Elizabethan, containing three quatrains rhyming alternately and a final couplet. To the main body of the poem this couplet was attached as the climax of the developed thought, or as an application of the central idea of the quatrains, and in it was found the most emphatic rhyme accent. Sidney, Daniel, Spenser, Shakspeare and Drummond accepted this form.

(2). Miltonic, containing an octave *abbaabba* and a sextet *cdcdcd* (generally). The octave presented distinctly and completely a basal thought or fact from which—although Milton does not always show a well-worked break between the two sections—the sextet proceeded as a corollary in the form of a sentiment, reflection, or conclusion, or, as has been happily said, as a crown or garland adorning the octave. The rhyme scheme of the first section was compact and unvarying, whilst, in the sextet, so well-distributed and so lightly-worked was the rhyme emphasis that no impediment was felt to the gradual subsidence of the thought towards the end of the poem. Milton gave also a simple, manly, direct tone to the sonnet; rejected all ingenuity and discursiveness of thought, and added a unity and severity of sentiment natural to his Puritan temper. Finally he widened the application of the form, as his sonnets do not dwell upon the common subject of the Elizabethan poets—human love.

(3). Recent sonnets in the Petrarchan or Italian model, in which the metrical and intellectual ebb and flow is strictly observed and in which, while the octave is fixed, the sextet is variable. An effort is sometimes made to sub-divide, with distinct shades of thought and feeling, the octave into quatrains and the sextet into tercets.

(4). Sonnets of miscellaneous structure.

In all the object is the same, the embodiment, in a single metrical flow and return, of a single wave of emotion which is too deeply charged with thought or too much adulterated with fancy to pass spontaneously into the pure lyric. There is a deep-seated instinct in human nature to choose for the rendering of single phases of thought or feeling a certain recognized form. Hence the tendency to eliminate all sonnet forms whose irregularity mars the sense of prescription and to fix upon the Shakspearean and the Petrarchan as the standard forms.

Models of these sonnet-forms are appended for examination:

(1). Shakspearean or Elizabethan :

SHAKSPERE'S THIRTIETH SONNET.

When to the sessions of sweet silent thought
 I summon up remembrance of things past,
 I sigh the lack of many a thing I sought,
 And with old woes new wail my dear time's waste :
 Then can I drown an eye, unus'd to flow,
 For precious friends hid in death's dateless night
 And weep afresh love's long-since cancelled woe,
 And moan the expense of many a vanish'd sight.
 Then can I grieve at grievances fore-gone,
 And heavily from woe to woe tell o'er
 The sad account of fore-bemoaned moan,
 Which I new pay as if not paid before.
 But if the while I think on thee, dear friend,
 All losses are restor'd, and sorrows end.

(2). Miltonic :

WHEN THE ASSAULT WAS INTENDED TO THE CITY.

Captain or colonel, or knight in arms,
 Whose chance on these defenceless doors may seize
 If deed of honour did thee ever please,
 Guard them and him within protect from harms.
 He can requite thee for he knows the charms
 That call fame on such gentle acts as these,
 And he can spread thy name o'er lands and seas,
 Whatever clime the sun's bright circle warms.
 Lift not thy spear against the muse's bower
 The great Emathian conqueror did spare
 The house of Pindarus, when temple and tower
 Went to the ground: and the repeated air
 Of sad Electra's poet had the power
 To save the Athenian walls from ruin bare.

(3). Recent—after Italian model :

The sonnets by Wordsworth in these selections.

(4). Miscellaneous :

SHELLEY'S OZYMANDIAS OF EGYPT.

I met a traveller from an antique land
 Who said : Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
 Stand in the desert. Near them on the sand,

Half sunk, a shatter'd visage lies, whose frown
 And wrinkled lip and sneer of cold command
 Tell that its sculptor well those passions read
 Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things,
 The hand that mocked them and the heart that fed ;
 And on the pedestal these words appear :
 " My name is Ozymandias, king of kings :
 Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair !"
 Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
 Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare,
 The lone and level sands stretch far away.

Wordsworth, as was natural considering the profoundly reflective character of his thought, found the sonnet form a peculiarly suitable vehicle, its narrowness imposing upon him the restraint which he did not know how to apply himself :

. to me
 In sundry moods, 'twas pastime to be bound
 Within the sonnet's scanty plot of ground :
 Pleased if some souls (for such there needs must be)
 Who have felt the weight of too much liberty,
 Should find brief solace there, as I have found.

Whilst in his sonnets he may not attain to the greater moral elevation of Milton, and whilst from his sonnets may be absent a joyful, loving, delicate interpretation of nature, we cannot but note in them a closely-packed and concentrated body of spiritual thought, and a depth and sincerity of sympathy with the "still sad music of humanity."

Over the form of the sonnet he possessed a complete mastery. Not that he was strictly accurate in his acceptance and use of the Italian or any model : his octaves often run over into his sextets ; the rhymes of his sextets are varied ; he rarely subdivides his thought into quatrains and tercets ; and refuses to follow the alternate rhymes of Shakspeare. But in all his sonnets there is a complete and rounded unity of purpose and thought. So marked was his control over this unity of conception and development, that, though the most voluminous of our sonneteers, he has left us among his three or four hundred sonnets scarcely one that falls below the level.

TO A DISTANT FRIEND.

It would be interesting to compare this sonnet with some of Shakspeare's upon his friendship, or with those of Drummond of Hawthornden. In his friendships as in all the functions of life, Wordsworth, whilst sincere, was dignified and self-controlled.

7, 8. The mind's least generous wish, etc. Without a selfish wish where his friend was concerned.

12, 13. Develop the force of the comparison.

LONDON, 1802.

The main body of thought in this poem appears frequently in the sonnets of Wordsworth. This tone of despair grows deeper and more tragic in the philosophy of Carlyle, whilst in the moral grandeur of the lament we are reminded of the great Puritan poet. Throughout the fourteen lines there is absent the fearful force of Byron. What shall remove the materialistic and utilitarian tendencies of our age? Not state control of man's virtues and vices but harmony with the guiding influences of nature! In the truth and calm of nature's laws, in the sweeter domestic virtues, "in pure religion," and in "fearful innocence" is found the blessing of cheerful happiness.

1. O friend! Coleridge (?).

3. Our life is only drest for show. The machinery of life, as Arnold would say, the comforts and conveniences that should enable us to do our real work better, are valued as ends in themselves while our work, the production of noble growths of mind and character, is forgotten

4. mean handywork, etc. Our life is a mean handywork, etc., men having ceased to regard or value character and come to estimate man not by what he is but by what he has.

5. Is the simile a happy one? Develop it.

7. **The wealthiest man among us is the best.** A reference to the growing plutocracy of Britain, to the disappearance of an aristocracy of birth or talent before the aristocracy of wealth.

9. **Rapine.** Modern competitive industrialism seeming to Wordsworth in many of its aspects little better than legalized robbery.

10. **This.** Rapine, etc.

11. **Plain living and high thinking.** The antithesis of high thinking is a low materialistic habit of mind. Nothing is more favourable to the development of this than over-attention to the gratification of appetite. Hence the kernel of truth in asceticism.

11-14. Peculiarly characteristic of the thought and manner of Wordsworth. In these four lines we find suggested both the creed and practice of his life. Compare with Cowper's *Task* or Goldsmith's *Deserted Village* for expressions of the same convictions.

THE SAME, 1802.

In his essay on Milton, Matthew Arnold says: "And in calling up Milton's memory we call up, let me say, a memory upon which in prospect of the Anglo-Saxon contagion and of its dangers, supposed and real, it may be well to lay stress even more than upon Shakspere's. If to our English race an inadequate sense for perfection of work is a real danger, if the discipline of respect for a high and flawless excellence is peculiarly needed by us, Milton is of all our gifted men the best lesson, the most salutary influence. In the sure and flawless perfection of his rhythm and diction he is as admirable as Virgil or Dante, and in this respect he is unique amongst us." The student will find it an interesting exercise to compare this sonnet with Keats' *On First Looking into Chapman's Homer*, or with Matthew Arnold's *Shakspere*.

It would be well also to compare this sonnet carefully in form with the preceding. Here the octave is closely-packed though

rendered nervous by the broken lines and abrupt pauses. The sextet justifies the invocation to Milton by a magnificent portrayal of his work and character. The first tercet of the sextet rings out with trumpet-like tones, whilst the last three lines present a mild subsidence of the passion of the poem.

4-6. An ideal national existence that poets fondly ascribe to the past.

Ancient English dower. Compare Burke's "The ancient and inbred integrity and piety, good nature and good humour of the English people."

6. **We are selfish men.** Selfishness is the great evil; self-sacrifice must alone be the ideal of duty, and through the self-sacrifice of the individual may the nation be saved. Compare with Carlyle's conception of the duties of a great man.

7, 8. Is this Wordsworth's conception of a poet's sphere of work? Compare with *A Poet's Epitaph*.

9-11. As a seriously meditative poet himself, Wordsworth surrounds his greatest human figures with a sense of spiritual loneliness and isolation. Compare

Newton with his prism and silent face,
The marble index of a mind forever
Voyaging through strange seas of thought alone

or

Yea, our blind poet, who in his later day,
Stood almost single, uttering obvious truth,—
Darkness before, and danger voice behind,
Soul awful.

Thou hadst a voice, etc. Compare with Keats on *Chapman's Homer*. Tennyson says:

O mighty-mouthed inventor of harmonies,
O skilled to sing of Time or Eternity,
God-gifted organ-voice of England,
Milton, a name to resound for ages.

12-14. Wordsworth's conception of true living. Compare with the preceding sonnet and with the *Ode to Duty*.

TO SLEEP.

1-5. Wordsworth has often felt—and knows—the soothing influences of nature, whether her scenes be actually present to the senses or summoned from the recesses of memory.

8. The poet's ear was exceedingly sensitive to nature's melodies—particularly to single sounds. A whole scene is often vividly portrayed to the reader by a striking reference to a solitary note. Compare :

. and that single wren
Which one day sang so sweetly in the nave
Of the old church
. that there I could have made
My dwelling-place and lived forever there
To hear such music.

or

There sometimes doth a leaping fish
Send through the tarn a lonely cheer.

or the Cuckoo poems.

11-14. Compare this sonnet in thought and form with Sidney's :

Come sleep ! O sleep, the certain knot of peace,
The baiting-place of wit, the balm of woe,
The poor man's wealth, the prisoner's release,
Th' indifferent judge between the high and low ;
With shield of proof shield me from out the press
Of those fierce darts Despair at me doth throw :
O make in me those civil wars to cease ;
I will good tribute pay, if thou do so.
Take thou of me smooth pillows, sweetest bed,
A chamber deaf to noise and blind to light,
A rosy garland and a weary head :
And if these things, as being thine in right
Move not thy heavy grace, thou shalt in me,
Livelier than elsewhere, Stella's image see.

Compare also with *The Ancient Mariner*, ll. 291-296 ; Wordsworth's other sonnets, *To Sleep* ; *Macbeth*, II., 2 ; *II. Henry IV.*, III., 1.

WITHIN KING'S COLLEGE CHAPEL, CAMBRIDGE.

Wordsworth wrote, in addition to a great many miscellaneous sonnets a series dedicated to Liberty, another to the River

Duddon, and, in a third series known as his *Ecclesiastical Sonnets*, 1822, seeks :

Upon the heights of Time, the source
Of a Holy River, on whose banks are found
Sweet pastoral flowers, and laurels that have crowned
Full oft the unworthy brow of lawless force ;
And for delight of him who tracks its course,
Immortal ananarth and palms abound.

Such a subject as the growth of the ecclesiastical forms and principles of a nation, so traditional and historical as it must be in character, could not be expected to present suggestive and inspiring ideas to the poet in whom already was fading the "shaping spirit of imagination." Perhaps but two of the series, that found in these selections and that on *Mutability*, are worthy of rank among his better sonnets.

King's College with its chapel was founded by Henry VI—the sainted Henry—in 1441, out of the funds of the dissolved alien priories. The chapel, with its lofty pinnacles, fretted roof of stone, and large windows of stained glass, is the pride of Cambridge.

3, 4. white-robed scholars. Students in academic dress.

6. Heaven regards the spirit of the giver, not the gift, its usefulness or its extent. Note the uncommon and strained use of "lore."

9-11. In these lines, Wordsworth has left us a fine impression of the stately pillars and of the Gothic roof which, with its sweeping arches, seemed hovering aloft.

13, 14. This Wordsworthian thought, highly serious and suggestive though it may be, comes upon the reader quite unexpectedly. The poet dearly loves a "tacked-on" moral truth, whose connection with the main thought of the poem is more or less loose and discursive.

Compare this sonnet in form with the preceding.

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE.

[Samuel Taylor Coleridge was born in 1772 in the vicarage at Ottery Saint Mary, in Devonshire. After the death of his father, an amiable, simple-minded and somewhat eccentric scholar, Coleridge was entered in 1782 as a student in Christ Hospital School, London, then under the headmastership of the Rev. James Boyer, an unusually stern but successful schoolmaster. A complete severance of home ties marked his school life at Christ's Hospital, 1782-91, and his subsequent Cambridge career, 1791-94. At the Hospital he had befriended Lamb, and in his last Cambridge vacation he became acquainted with Southey. In 1789, he read with strange enthusiasm the sonnets of Bowles, and in 1793, he recognized in the *Descriptive Sketches* of Wordsworth the work of a poetic genius of the highest rank. Some achievements in Greek verse, an unsuccessful, almost ludicrous attempt at soldiering and a withdrawal without a degree marked his college history, a history wherein were strangely mingled poetry and metaphysics; radicalism and atheism; love, politics and debts. In 1795, with Southey, in Bristol, he wrote, lectured and discussed quixotic social reforms; in 1796, he took up his residence at Nether Stowey, in Somersetshire, near the Wordsworths, with whom in 1798, he proceeded to Germany to study philosophy and literature. After his return to England in 1800, his life though somewhat unsteady was a very quiet one: writing political articles for the press, and lecturing upon literary subjects in London; journeying to Malta and Italy in search of health; publishing in the north a literary and philosophical journal, *The Friend*; living quietly with the Morgans at Hammersmith and Calne; and spending peacefully the last eighteen years of his life under the treatment of Dr. Gillman, at Highgate. His literary work covers many fields of intellectual labour. Before 1800, his best poems, the *Ancient Mariner*, *Christabel* and the Odes were written. He devoted himself from 1800-1817, to journalism, to literary criticism and to

philosophy, contributing to the *Morning Post*, lecturing on Shakspeare, writing the *Biographia Literaria*, and studying the philosophic systems of Kant and Schelling. From 1817 until his death in 1834, by printed book and familiar talk, he strove to impart to the English world his views in theology and philosophy. His dramas *Remorse* and *Zapolya* were, perhaps, more successful than Wordsworth's *Borderers*.]

Chronological List of Coleridge's Works with Dates of Publication.

[In the case of longer works this order may be only approximately correct. Different editions often repeat certain poems.]

Fall of Robespierre (in part)	1794
Poems—1st Edition	1796
Ode on the Departing Year	1796
Poems—2nd Edition (some by Lamb and Lloyd)	1797
Osorio (Remorse)—a Tragedy	1813
Kubla Khan	1816
Ancient Mariner (Lyrical Ballads)	1798
Christabel	1816
France, an Ode ; Frost at Midnight ; Fears in Solitude. .	1798
Wallenstein (Translation)	1800
Poems	1803
Pains of Sleep	1816
Lay Sermons, Biographia Literaria	1817
Sibylline Leaves (Collected Poems)	1817
Zapolya—a Drama	1817
Aids to Reflection	1825
Editions of Works in 1823, 1829, 1834.	

GENERAL ESTIMATE.

COLERIDGE is a peculiar literary phenomenon whose real significance is not very easily estimated. As with all phenomena that have risen and disappeared prior to our time, our first impressions of the man and of his works are what Matthew Arnold calls the traditional or historical estimate, faint echoes of what his contemporaries thought of him, reverberations of the mighty volume of eulogy enthusiastically poured forth by Hazlitt, Landor, De Quincey, Scott and Wordsworth. "The only wonderful man I ever knew was Coleridge," says Wordsworth. "He was the only man I ever knew who answered to the idea of a man of genius," said Hazlitt, "he is the only person of whom I ever learnt anything. His genius had angelic wings and fed on manna. He talked on forever and you wished him to talk on forever." "He is," said De Quincey, "the largest and most spacious intellect, the subtlest and most comprehensive that has yet existed among men." "Impiety to Shakspeare!" cried Landor, "treason to Milton! I give up all the rest, even Bacon. Certainly since their day we have nothing at all comparable with him. Byron and Scott were but gunflints to a granite mountain. Wordsworth has one angle of resemblance." Even *Blackwood's*, whose references to Coleridge's work during his lifetime were marked by a severity amounting almost to personal rancor, said after his death that he alone perhaps of all

men that ever lived was always a poet—in all his moods, and they were many—inspired. Now, what strikes most students when they turn to Coleridge's works for a real as distinguished from the historic estimate, is the discrepancy between the historic estimate and their first impressions of him. Passages there are in abundance, no doubt, of divine rhythm and melody, of exquisite diction, of delicate observation of nature, of subtle psychology, of penetrative insight into the obscurer significance of phenomena, of sensitive feeling for the rarer and more elusive visitations of spirit, those intimations of our higher moments which Wordsworth speaks of as "gleams like the flashing of a shield," of sweeping comprehension and of profound and solemn musings "on man, on nature and on human life." But these imperishable lines and passages are embedded even more than in Wordsworth's case in a mass of inferior work, or else the poem in which they occur has been left unfinished. In the former case our approach to them is clogged and obstructed and the high wrought mood chilled, in which we leave them; in the latter case we are raised to the loftiest sphere of contemplation, "pinnacled dim in the intense inane," and left to reach the *terra firma* of ordinary emotion as best we may. In other words, Coleridge's poetry contains many noble passages, but is fragmentary, incomplete, lacking in architectonics.

Turning to his prose works we meet with a somewhat similar set of phenomena; neat and happy turns of thought and expression, deep insight into life, mingled with passages of the purest bombast or the merest pettifoggalizing, numberless digressions which, though often excellent in themselves, have

no direct bearing upon the matter in hand, in short, an almost utter absence of organization, of subordination of parts to a whole. If we ask why a man capable of producing such magnificent fragments both in prose and in verse did not leave us more finished work, his contemporaries again are ready with the explanation. "I am grieved," said Southey, "that you never met Coleridge. All other men I have ever known were mere children to him, and yet all is palsied by a total want of moral strength." "He is like a lump of coal rich in gas," said Scott, "which lies expending itself in puffs and gleams unless some shrewd body will clap it into an iron box and compel the compressed element to do itself justice." Here then, surely, is a psychological phenomenon whose development may profitably be followed.

COLERIDGE'S PSYCHOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT.

"What shapes itself for criticism," says Walter Pater, of Coleridge, in *Ward's Selections*, "is not, as with most poets, the gradual development of a poetic gift, determined, enriched, retarded by the circumstances of the poet's life, but the sudden blossoming through one short season of such a gift already perfect in its kind, which thereafter deteriorates as suddenly with something like premature old age." Not exactly. This is drawing too hard and fast a line of separation between the poetic faculty and the ordinary reason. What shapes itself for criticism is rather the growth of a mind, determined, enriched and retarded by the poet's life, stimulated by specially favourable circumstances into poetic activity, and on the withdrawing of the stimulus, sinking into analytic and critical

work, but exhibiting even there its native delicacy and fineness. Coleridge's life may therefore be divided into three periods : (1) the period of growth ; (2) the creative period ; and (3) the critical or analytical period.

1.—ACQUISITION.

Coleridge, the youngest of a family of thirteen children, was born on the 21st of October, 1772, at his father's vicarage in Devonshire. From his father, a gentle, abstracted and unpractical clergyman of the Parson Adams type, Coleridge seems to have inherited that Celtic organization which is so marked a characteristic of the western counties, where the Teutonic current of our blood is mingled with large if not preponderant Celtic strain. As a child he was sociable, alternately gay and self-absorbed, a good talker, quick to perceive, and even morbidly imaginative. There is a story that in his fifth or sixth year, having quarrelled with a brother, and being in dread of a whipping, he spent the whole of an October night of rain and wind on the banks of the Otter, where he was found at daybreak perished with cold and without the power of using his limbs.

His first school was the free Grammar School of his native place, of which his father was master. Here he showed great precocity, but being the youngest and most favoured child he was allowed to direct his own reading. He became an omnivorous reader in out-of-the-way books of out-of-the-way authors, and soon acquired the habit of taking refuge against all boyish miseries in a weird, imaginary and supernatural world of his own peopling. The world of sense became unvital

to him. He lived not in the world of motion but in that of ideas. "I heard him," he says of his father's effort to interest him in astronomy, "with profound delight and admiration, but without the least mixture of wonder or incredulity. For from my early reading of fairy tales and about genii and the like, my mind had been habituated to the Vast, and I never regarded my senses in any way as the criteria of my belief. I regulated all my creeds by my conceptions, not by my sight, even at that age." His father died when he was nine years of age, and in the following year he was sent to Christ's Hospital, London, where, severed thus early from home and rural associations, he passed the next seven years

. reared
In the great city, pent ! mid cloisters dim,
And saw nought lovely but the sky and stars.

At school he had the advantage of a very sensible though at the same time a very severe master, the Rev. James Boyer, whose teaching had an important influence in giving his mind its peculiar bent for criticism and speculation. He was taught to "prefer Demosthenes to Cicero, Homer to Virgil, and Shakspeare and Milton to Dryden and Pope, on the grounds of plain sense and universal logic, to see that poetry, even that of the loftiest and seemingly the wildest odes, had a logic of its own as severe as that of science and more difficult, because more complex and dependent on more, and more fugitive causes, and that in truly great poetry there was a reason assignable not only for every word, but for the position of every word. At the same time he was taught to show no mercy in his compositions to metaphor or image unsupported

by sound sense." His craving for affection drew him into close friendship with Lamb and Middleton. Lamb pictures him as, at this time, a shy, shrinking boy, fonder of books than of play, though sociable and affectionate—a boy whom other boys would like. It was his constant habit to be on the roof of the school and dream of the vales and streams and woods of his native place. This and the critical nature of his studies tended to throw his mind in upon itself, to make him more self-absorbed. One day in the street, wholly pre-occupied, alone among crowds, deaf to the turmoil about him, he fancied himself Leander swimming the Hellespont, and thrust out his arms while buffeting the waves. In doing so he tugged at the coat tails of a gentleman who at first took him for a clumsy young thief, but on hearing his explanation paid his subscription to a circulating library. This was a high privilege to the lonely, imaginative boy; he read at the rate of two volumes a day, and Lamb tells of the admiration of casual passers through the cloisters to hear Coleridge unfold in his deep and sweet intonations the mysteries of Plato and Plotinus. This omnivorous reading had led him by his fifteenth year into metaphysical and theological controversy. Nothing else pleased him. History and particular facts lost all interest for him, poetry, novels and romances became insipid to him. In his friendless wanderings he tells us he was highly delighted if any passenger, especially if he were dressed in black, would enter into conversation with him. He soon found the means of directing it to his favourite subjects

Of providence, foreknowledge, will and fate,
Fixed fate, free will, foreknowledge absolute,
And found no end, in wandering mazes lost.

He read Voltaire and blossomed into an infidel, and venturing one day to offer that as a reason for declining to become a clergyman, he received from the master a most severe flogging. "So, sirrah! you are an infidel, are you," said he, "then I'll flog your infidelity out of you," and proceeded to exterminate Voltaire by the agency of the birch. Whatever may have been the efficacy of the flogging, two other influences were soon to withdraw Coleridge from this premature absorption in abstract thought—the shock of young love-liking and the sonnets of Bowles, one of the precursors of Wordsworth. Some compositions in English poetry belonging to this time, and not without a touch of genius, were the fruits of these new influences. Of these *Genevieve* was the chief :

Maid of my love ! sweet Genevieve !
 In beauty's light you glide along ;
 Your eye is like the star of eve,
 And sweet your voice as seraph's song.
 Yet not your heavenly beauty gives
 This heart with passion soft to glow ;
 Within your soul a voice there lives !
 It bids you hear the tale of woe.
 When sinking low the sufferer wan
 Beholds no hand outstretched to save,
 Fair as the bosom of the swan
 That rises graceful o'er the wave,
 I've seen your breast with pity heave,
 And therefore love I you, sweet Genevieve.

But the main tendency of the school was to turn his imagination into speculation and criticism rather than poetical production. Even the sonnets of Bowles, for the appreciation of which his previous reading of Milton and Shakspeare had prepared him, did more (indirectly) for his critical than for his creative faculty, for among those who were attracted by his amiable nature and remarkably entertaining conversation

were of course, many admirers of the old school ; discussions arose regarding the relative merits of Dryden and Pope and Bowles ; Coleridge was obliged to defend his favourite, to find reasons for his preference, and he came to see that the excellence of the so-called classical poetry of the 18th century consisted in just and acute observations on men and manners in an artificial state of society as its matter and substance, and in the logic of wit conveyed in smooth epigrammatic couplets as its form, that it consisted not so much of poetic thoughts as of thoughts translated into the language of poetry.

In February, 1791, Coleridge went up to Jesus College, Cambridge, an excellent Greek and Latin scholar, a tolerable Hebraist, an acute and critical student of Chaucer, Shakspeare and Milton, and one of the most widely read and keenly speculative minds of the time. A school-fellow, who followed him to the university, has described in glowing terms the evenings in Coleridge's rooms, when "Æschylus, Plato and Thucydides were pushed aside, with a pile of lexicons and the like, to discuss the pamphlets of the day. Ever and anon a pamphlet issued from the pen of Burke. There was no need of having the book before us : Coleridge had read it in the morning and could repeat whole pages verbatim." He read Burke to refute him, for at this time he was a radical of the radicals, and with impassioned zeal strained every faculty in defence of the Revolutionary movement. This effort gave him great insight into the nature of the individual man, and comprehensive views of his social relations, of the uses of trade and commerce, and of the extent to which the relative wealth and power of nations promote or impede their welfare and in-

herited strength. He began to regard the affairs of man as a process moving forward, without hurry and without rest, to a preappointed end—a maturity of mind relatively greater than that of most men of his age, and destined to make his change of attitude towards the Revolution less abrupt and reactionary. At the same time he kept up the habit of omnivorous reading and wide critical and comparative study of English and classical literature, begun at Christ's Hospital. A lucky observation threw great light on the causes of the formality of 18th century writing. Casting his eye on a university prize poem he met this line :

Lactea purpureos interstrepit unda lapillos.

In the *Nutricia* of Politian, he remembered this line :

Pura coloratos interstrepit unda lapillos.

Following the clue thus discovered, he found that the Latin prize versifier first prepared his thoughts and then picked out from Virgil or Horace the halves or quarters of lines in which to express them. When young men trained in this way came to write their own language the result must be formality. He was continually adducing in support of his criticism of 18th century artificiality the metre and diction of the Greek poets from Homer to Theocritus inclusive, and still more of our elder English poets from Chaucer to Milton. Nor was this all. As it was his constant reply to authorities brought against him from later poets of great name, that no authority could avail in opposition to truth, logic and the laws of universal grammar, actuated, too, by his former passion for metaphysical investigation, he laboured at a solid foundation on which to ground his

opinions, in the component faculties of the human mind and their comparative dignity and importance. According to the faculty or source from which the pleasure given by any poem or passage was derived, he estimated the merit of such poem or passage. As the result of all his reading and reflection he abstracted two critical aphorisms which he then deemed to comprise the conditions and criteria of poetic style: (1) that not the poem which we have read, but the poem to which we return with pleasure—the pleasure being a worthy one—possesses the genuine power and claims the name of essential poetry; (2) that whatever lines can be translated into other words in the same language without diminution of their significance, either in sense or in association, or in any other worthy feeling, are so far vicious in their diction. He was wont boldly to affirm that it would be scarcely more difficult to push a stone out of the pyramids with the bare hand than to alter a word or the position of a word in Milton or Shakspeare without making the author say something else or something worse than he does say. One great distinction he at this time appeared to see between the characteristic faults of the elder poets and the false beauties of the moderns. In the former, from Donne to Cowley, there were the most fantastic out-of-the-way thoughts in the most pure and genuine mother English; in the latter, thoughts the most obvious, in language the most fantastic and arbitrary. Pope's

or

As when the moon, refulgent lamp of night,

Around her throne the vivid planets roll
And stars unnumbered gild the glowing pole

were good examples, he thought, of poetry, with its eye not

upon the object but on its broken and heterogeneous imagery. Of the latter, as a translation of Homer's,

ἄστρο φαεινὴν ἄμφι σελήνην φαίνει' ἄμπρεχεα
(the stars round about the full moon shine pre-eminently bright,)

it was difficult, he thought, to say whether the sense or the diction were the more absurd. Another example was Pope's translation of Homer's simile of the dogstar, introduced to illustrate the effect on Priam of the sight of Achilles' shield,

Terrific glory ! for his burning breath
Taints the red air with fevers, plagues and death, "

in which, says Coleridge, "not to mention the tremendous bombast, the dogstar is turned into a real dog, a very odd dog, a fire, fever, plague and death-breathing, red-air-tainting dog, and the whole visual likeness is lost while the likeness in the effects is rendered absurd by the exaggeration."

During his last year of residence, Coleridge read Wordsworth's first publication, *The Descriptive Sketches*. Seldom, if ever, he thought, was the emergence of an original poetic genius above the literary horizon more evidently announced. "In the form, style and manner of the whole poem, and in the structure of the particular lines and periods, there was a harshness and acerbity connected and combined with images all aglow which might recall those products of the vegetable world whose gorgeous blossoms rose out of the hard and thorny rind and shell within which the rich fruit was elaborating. The language was not only peculiar and strong, but at times knotty and contorted by its own impatient strength, while the novelty and struggling crowd of images, acting in

conjunction with the difficulties of the style, demanded greater closeness of attention than descriptive poetry has a right to claim." In the following extract Coleridge fancied he saw an emblem of the poem itself and of the author's genius as it was then displayed :

'Tis storm ! and hid in mist from hour to hour,
All day the floods a deeper murmur pour ;
The sky is veiled, and every cheerful sight :
Dark is the region as with coming night ;
And yet what frequent bursts of overpouring light !
Triumphant on the bosom of the storm
Glances the fire-clad eagle's wheeling form
Eastward, in long perspective glittering, shine
The wood-crowned cliffs that o'er the lake recline ;
Wide o'er the Alps a hundred streams unfold
At once to pillars turned that flame with gold ;
Behind the sail the peasant strives to shun
The west, that burns like one dilated sun,
Where in a mighty crucible expire
The mountans, glowing hot, like coals of fire.

From the contact with Wordsworth there followed no doubt some quickening of his long-dormant feeling for nature, but the main influence was critical—he no sooner felt the excellence of the new poetry than he sought to understand it.

In 1794 Coleridge left Cambridge without taking his degree or deciding on his course in life. From Cambridge he went to Oxford. At Oxford he met Southey, whom he accompanied to Bristol, then the rallying point of quite a circle of literary people, including Hannah More and Robert Hall, the Baptist minister. The young poets found themselves in sympathy with many people, especially a family of young ladies, the daughters of a Stephen Fricker, to one of whom Southey was engaged, and with another of whom Coleridge promptly fell in love. At Bristol they talked and planned Pantisocracy—a

colony to be established on the banks of the Susquehanna and based on the principles of liberty, fraternity and equality. The scheme fell through for want of funds, much to Coleridge's chagrin, to whom the financial necessity seems scarcely to have occurred. From Bristol he went to London to renew his friendship with Lamb. He loitered many months in the metropolis, receiving, it is said, free quarters from mine host of the "Salutation and the Cat," and expressing himself vehemently in opposition to Pitt's policy and the war with France, predicting and praying for the humiliation of Britain and the allies, who, like "fiends embattled by a wizard's wand," were marching to "whelm a disenchanted nation," for he was still an ardent republican, regarding the Reign of Terror then at its height as the accidental accompaniment of a movement in itself beneficial. Southey, at length, impatient of his neglect of Miss Fricker, came up to London and brought him back to Bristol. In 1795, with no more visible means of support than when he left Cambridge, he and Miss Fricker were married. It was at this time that he gave the course of lectures at Bristol on religion and philosophy, only moderately successful, which were afterwards published under the title *Conciones ad Populum*. From Bristol he moved to Clevedon, depending for subsistence on desultory journalism and the proceeds of a forthcoming volume of poetry. He projected a weekly publication, *The Watchman*. A thousand names were secured, but the paper lived only two months, the jacobin and democratic patrons having been offended by Coleridge's lukewarmness, his attacks on their infidelity and adoption of French morals, his defence of the government's gagging bills

as likely to produce an effect desired by all true friends of liberty, in deterring ignorant men from declaiming on subjects of which they know nothing, and his pleading for national education accompanied by the spread of the Gospel. Conscientiously an opponent of the war then going on, yet with eyes thoroughly opened to the true character of the favourers of revolutionary principles in England, a vehement anti-ministerialist, but after the French invasion of Switzerland, a still more vehement anti-Gallican, he retired to a cottage at Nether Stowey, and, providing for his scanty maintenance by writing verses for a London morning paper, devoted himself to poetry, ethics and psychology. The truth is, that in part from constitutional indolence or dreaminess, and in part from the habits and influences of a classical education which in the very hey-day of hope had, as we saw, rationalized and regulated his enthusiasm, his mind sank into despondency with regard to both political and religious controversies and the parties disputant. With more than poetic feeling he exclaimed, "the sensual and the dark rebel in vain—slaves by their own compulsion." He devoted his thoughts and studies to the foundations of religion and moral Here he found himself all afloat. Doubts rushed in, broke upon him from the fountains of the great deep. The fontal truths of natural religion and the books of revelation alike contributed to the flood, and it looked as if his ark would never touch an Ararat.

2.—ANNUS MIRABILIS—CREATIVE INTERVAL.

About this time he met Wordsworth, who thereupon moved to Alfoxden to be within reach of him, and thus began a

memorable personal and literary friendship, resulting in a poetic movement of the highest importance. Each of these vigorous and original minds influenced the other. Coleridge's intelligent appreciation restored that faith in his own powers which Wordsworth seemed to have lost, and without which production would have been impossible. The first effect of this new companionship on Coleridge was to withdraw him for the moment from philosophy and theology, and to force his dormant buds of poetry into blossom. Speculation and critical writing, could Coleridge like Arnold have frankly accepted his limitations, was undoubtedly his main bent, yet on two occasions he was with great advantage temporarily withdrawn from abstract thought. The first was when Bowles' Sonnets saved him at the age of fifteen from premature absorption in theology, and the second, his meeting with Wordsworth in 1796. In both cases he returned to the speculative sphere with restored elasticity, obtained, Antæus-like, by fresh contact with concrete fact.

The period of his residence at Nether Stowey in the society of Wordsworth, 1797-98, was his *annus mirabilis*, or period of greatest poetical productivity. With peace and happiness at home, and stimulated by the friendship of Wordsworth and the latter's finely gifted sister, he poured forth in poetical form the results of his widely assimilative mental efforts, composing or planning at that time nearly all the poems on which his reputation as a poet depends. A joint volume, the *Lyrical Ballads*, was planned, in which the homely themes were assigned to Wordsworth while Coleridge undertook the handling of the supernatural. And never has the supernatural

been used with such delicate art or made to express so well the thought of a reflective age. The *Ancient Mariner* was written, and the *Dark Ladie* and *Christabel* begun in obedience to this compact. The *Ancient Mariner* and *Christabel* are both exquisite treatments of the supernatural. The *Ancient Mariner* is a perfectly rounded unity, and leaves an impression of completeness on the mind of the reader. It is "Coleridge's one really finished work in a life that promised and planned many things." It is an exquisite treatment of the supernatural from the point of view of modern scepticism regarding objective visions. The mediæval mind believed in the objective reality of ghosts, phantoms and spirits. The modern mind, rational, analytic, self-scrutinizing, rejects this as absurd and impossible and explains all such appearances as subjective phenomena, states of the individual mind or uses these crude old conceptions to convey a more delicately spiritual meaning. This is what Coleridge has done in the *Ancient Mariner*. Coleridge in short originated that finely symbolical use of the supernatural which Tennyson has used so effectively in the *Idylls of the King*. Both poets found in popular story a wealth of romance material capable of being made to convey a finer meaning to modern men.

3.—CRITICAL PERIOD.

It soon became manifest that Wordsworth's influence would be to strengthen his critical and speculative bent rather than his poetical faculty. Coleridge set himself to understand rather than to emulate Wordsworth. At first he wished to emulate, but soon the master inclination prevailed, his poetical

activity flagged, and he set himself to discover the secret of his friend's power. Repeated meditations upon the excellence of Wordsworth's poetry led him to suspect that fancy and imagination were two distinct faculties. The establishment of this distinction would have, he thought, incalculable results, for in energetic minds truth soon changed, he said, by domestication into power, and from directing in the discrimination and appraisal of the product becomes influence in the production. To admire on principle was therefore the only way to imitate without loss of liberty. To establish this poetic creed now became his main interest. He returned to his philosophy. The foundations of religion and morals from which his temporary devotion to poetry had withdrawn him, re-engaged his attention. Through repeated conversations with Wordsworth, who makes a similar distinction in his prefaces, Coleridge established to his own and his friend's satisfaction, the existence of distinct faculties in the human mind, fancy and imagination, the former related to the understanding, the latter, the organ of real poetry. With the problems of religion and morals he had a severer struggle. He read, he tells us, deeply in Locke, Leibnitz, Berkeley and Hartley, but without finding an abiding place for his reason. All philosophies might be classed, he found, under the following heads: Idealism, Realism, Dualism. The idealist denies the objective existence of matter, and explains all phenomena by reference to mind; the realist tries to make all mental and spiritual phenomena mere functions of matter; the dualist recognizes both mind and matter, but is unable to show their relation. He began to ask himself whether a system of philosophy as

distinguished from mere history and historic classification were possible, and for a while felt disposed to answer no, and to admit that the sole practical employment of the human mind was to observe, to collect and to classify. Human nature rebelled, however, against this wilful resignation of intellect. The German mystics, especially the theosophist Jacob Behmen, flattered his faith in the nobility of the human soul and in the existence of God, though incapable of furnishing him with any logical ground. He was pleased with Des Cartes' opinion that the idea of God was distinguished from all other ideas by involving its own reality or in being self-evident, but he was not wholly satisfied. He began then to ask himself what proof we had of the outward existence of anything, of this sheet of paper for example, as a thing in itself apart from the phenomenon or image in our perception. He saw that in the nature of things such proof was impossible, and that of all modes of being that are not objects of sense, the existence is assumed by a logical necessity arising from the constitution of the mind itself, that the existence of God was proved by the absence of any motive to doubt it. Still the belief in the existence of a Being, the ground of all existence, was not yet the belief in the existence of a moral Creator or governor such as was required to inspire religion and morality. The belief in the fatherhood of God was obtained from the moral consciousness, as the belief in his existence had already been reached by considering man's intellectual nature. Thus in a clumsy and imperfect way, imperfect as laying too much stress on the intensive rather than the rational side of faith, on the impossibility of demonstrating our intimations of the ideal and

divine, Coleridge had discovered, as we have all to discover or retrograde, that the only certain rock of truth, the only permanent basis of human faith and hope, the everlasting granite on which all human beliefs and institutions are built, is the intellect and conscience of man.

The will is free,
Strong is the soul and wise and beautiful,
The seeds of God-like power are in us still,
Gods are we, bards, saints, heroes if we will.

A visit to Germany and the consequent greater familiarity with the Kantian philosophy and its distinction of phenomenal and noumenal understanding and reason, objects of sense and things in themselves so akin to his own independent thinking, settled his philosophical and religious opinions in their permanent mould. He came under the influence of the great German critic Lessing, and was enabled to see the weakness of English criticism, its dependence on factitious or accidental canons, its submission to individual or racial dictates or laws, its lack of method, its narrow and sensual conception of art. He also acquired such a mastery of the language as enabled him to complete the translation of Schiller's *Wallenstein* in six weeks. This, the finest piece of verse translation in English, was highly appreciated by Scott and other students of German, and it is to be regretted that Coleridge never acceded to repeated requests that he should undertake the translation of *Faust*. In many places Coleridge expanded and added to the original, some of which additions Schiller himself incorporated in subsequent editions. During the first two years of the century Coleridge wrote many papers for the *Morning Post*. At first he opposed Pitt's policy, but

later he separated from Fox on the question of a renewal of the war with Napoleon. Indeed he was charged by Scott with having been mainly instrumental in bringing about a renewal of hostilities, and is said to have incurred the resentment of Napoleon. His own account of his change of view is that, like Lord Minto, Mr. Windham and many other Whigs, he felt that all questions of domestic policy must, at a time of European peril, be postponed. From this time forward, however, he came more and more under the influence of Burke's writings, and showed increased respect for the ordered liberty of constitutional government. But he never became a reactionary, that very speculation which he sometimes regretted giving him at all times a power of living more in the abiding realities and less in the ebb and flow of things than most men much older. Wordsworth, for example, thus describes his feelings at the outbreak of the Revolution :

Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive,
But to be young was very heaven.

In his inexperience he even thought that possibly through himself, an insignificant stranger, yet strong in hope and noble aspiration, with a spirit thoroughly faithful to itself, the needful direction and moving power for distracted France might be found. When by pressure of facts he was driven into alienation, his distress was great and prolonged, and the cure a heavy sacrifice. In Matthew Arnold's words, he went to a monastery, that is, he abandoned all interest in the social, dramatic and historic life of man, concentrating himself with eminent success, it is true, on the study of Nature. Coleridge, on the other hand, as he had read more widely, had

more sober speculations, and was less keenly disappointed at the failure of the Revolution. His feelings he tells us in the *Ode to France* were at the outset those of mingled hope and fear, and as early as 1793 he saw, he says, and often enough stated in public, the horrid delusion, the vile mockery of the whole affair. When the end came, he neither participated in the moral exhaustion, the loss of enthusiasm which most of the revolutionary enthusiasts experienced, nor withdrew himself from politics and history into a sphere more vital. Could Coleridge have frankly accepted his limitations, have recognized that his special gift was a gift not so much of creation and synthesis as of analysis and interpretation, his own life might have been happier, and the world very much richer for his life. Matthew Arnold, for example, discovering, by the test of fifteen years experimenting, that he fell short of supreme poetical performance, turned to criticism and interpretation and achieved a distinguished success. Coleridge longed to be a poet and could not recognize his repeated falling into criticism and speculation as indications of the line along which he might hope to succeed, could not see that in giving a superior dignity, gravity, logical arrangement and philosophic method to British journalism not yet extinct, he was doing a magnificent work. Throwing up a tempting offer of a part proprietorship in the *Morning Post*, he left London for the Lakes to devote himself to literature, and in the hope, it is said, of stimulating his flagging muse, he resorted more freely than ever to opium. The habit, rapidly developing, was pursued, and for fifteen years the record of Coleridge's life is a miserable history of estrangement from friends, self-

reproach, and utter prostration of spirit. The bitterness of the poet's degradation finds expression in *Youth and Age* and the *Ode to Dejection*.

At last, in 1816, he entered the family of Mr. Gilman, under whose kind and judicious treatment the hour of mastery at length arrived, Nature, which so beneficently turns loss into gain, making his opium experience a means of understanding the psychology of dream. Coleridge hardly ever went abroad again, but Highgate became the Mecca of every young and generous spirit, whose interest in the ideal and divine was sure to be stimulated by the magic of Coleridge's conversation. To summarize our view of his psychological development, the main phenomenon of Coleridge's life is not the gradual growth of a poetic gift determined, enriched and retarded by the circumstances of the poet's life, but the spectacle of a richly endowed nature deficient, however, in practical insight, early getting a strong bent towards speculation and criticism, blossoming suddenly through one short season into poetry perfect of its kind, then returning to its own proper line, falling under the power of opium, at length gaining the mastery over self, and finding in conversation its own true form and the vehicle through which to exert an immense and stimulating effect on literature and criticism ; a mind in which ideas were so vivid, so numerous, and appearing in such endless combinations and modifications, a mind in which the feelings and affections were more closely attached to those ideal creations than to the objects of the senses, a mind so occupied with ideals as to preclude or arrest the impulse to realize them ; a mind in short so sicklied o'er with the pale

cast of thought that enterprises of great pith and moment turned awry and lost the name of action. In other words, Coleridge's was a temperament too Celtic to fall into Teutonic prose and vulgarity, but too insufficiently endowed with Teutonic sanity to give to his life consistency or to his sublime conceptions a local habitation and a name, and yet achieving through his very Celtic delicacy and love for ideas a magnificent success.

DEVELOPMENT OF STYLE.

In his earliest work, *Genevieve*, done at Christ's Hospital in 1786, we catch amid much monotony of figure and epithet, much affectation and insincerity of feeling the faint prelude of that delicacy and aerialness of verse music which is so marked a characteristic of *Christabel*, *Kubla Khan* and the *Ancient Mariner*.

Maid of my love, sweet Genevieve !
 In beauty's light you glide along :
 Your eye is like the star of eve,
 And sweet your voice as seraph's song.
 Yet not your heavenly beauty gives
 This heart with passion soft to glow :
 Within your soul a voice there lives !
 It bids you hear the tale of woe.
 When sinking low the sufferer wan
 Beholds no hand outstretched to save,
 Fair as the bosom of the swan
 That rises graceful o'er the wave,
 I've seen your breast with pity heave,
 And, therefore, love I you, sweet Genevieve !

In the evolution of Coleridge's peculiar manner there are three main stages : (1) the imitative period culminating in the ode, the style of which is marked by obscurity, a general turpidity of diction and a profusion of new-coined double-

epithets; (2) clarification or blank verse period, in which the poet attempted to tame the swell and glitter of both thought and diction; and (3) the return to the ode whose freedom of movement and lofty, impetuous and sonorous style make it the most suitable vehicle for Coleridge's thought and feeling.

At Christ's Hospital Coleridge had almost incessant practice in Latin and in English versification. In those school exercises and juvenile pieces may be detected the echoes of various tunes, ancient and modern. Milton is his model in the *Autumnal Moon*:

Mild splendour of the various-vested night,
Mother of wildly-working visions! Hail!
I watch thy gliding, while with vested light
Thy weak eye glimmers through a fleecy veil;

Gray in:

Where graced with many a classic spire
Cam rolls his reverend stream along;

Burns with his strong erotic colouring in:

As late each flower that sweetest blows
I plucked, the garden's pride!
Within the petals of a rose
A sleeping Love I spied.

There is an Ossianic ring about:

The stream with languid murmurs creeps
In Lumin's flowery vale;
Beneath the dew the lily weeps
Slow-waving to the gale—

or

How long will ye round me be swelling
O ye blue tumbling waves of the sea?
Not always in caves was my dwelling
Nor beneath the cold blast of the tree.

Now he is experimenting with the ballad jingle:

But soon came a woodman in leathern guise,
His brow like a penthouse hung over his eyes,
But with many a hem! and a sturdy stroke,
At length he brought down the poor Raven's own oak.

And now in the sweetness and joyousness of a Greek measure:

As late in wreaths gay flowers I bound,
 Beneath some roses, love I found,
 And by his little frolic pinion
 As quick as thought I seized the minion,
 Then in my cup the prisoner threw
 And drank him in its sparkling dew:
 And sure I feel my angry guest
 Fluttering his wings within my breast!

Even the capabilities of the rhyming couplet and the balanced antithetical style of the 18th century are tested:

No, thou shalt drink, and thou shalt know
 Her transient bliss, her lasting woe,
 Her maniac joys, that know no measure,
 And not rude and painted pleasure;
 Till (sad reverse!) the Enchantress vile
 To frown converts her magic smile.

And yet in all these imitative efforts there may easily be traced a copiousness of diction, a picturesqueness of epithet and phrase peculiarly Coleridge's own. While thus imitating other poets in thought and manner, Coleridge was rapidly developing his own individual powers. As a youth he was given to habits of persistent introspection, of his own mental states he was a close observer, and for the result of this subjective analysis he found adequate expression in the ode alone. In the ode on the *Destruction of the Bastille* (1789), moulded, it is probable, on Gray's *Ode to Poesy*, Coleridge begins to show a growing aptness in the choice of words, a concreteness of expression, and a rhythmical vigour and energy. It was natural enough, considering the richness and many-sidedness of his mind, that his work at this time should show some obscurity, some turgidness of diction, a profusion of new-

coined double-epithets, some swell and glitter, both of thought and diction, and against these the critics set up a howl.

The second stage in the evolution of his style was entered upon when in deference to the criticisms passed upon the swell and glitter of his thought and diction he began practising blank verse. There is in the work of this period a marked decrease of insincerity, artificiality, turgidness, swell and glitter, and stiff classicality, and a marked increase in sincerity, sonorousness and variety. The melody of the following is inimitable :

And now its strings
 Boldlier swept, the long sequacious notes
 Over delicious surges sink and rise,
 Such a soft floating witchery of sound
 As twilight elfins make. . . .

But on the whole his blank verse is imitative, at its best Miltonic or Wordsworthian—Miltonic in the following passage:

In the primeval age, a dateless while,
 The vacant shepherd wandered with his flock,
 Pitching his tent where'er the green grass waved.

Wordsworthian in

And what if all of aminated Nature
 Be but organic harps diversely framed,
 That tremble into thought, as o'er them sweeps
 Plastic and vast, one intellectual breeze,
 At once the soul of each and God of all?

His experiments in blank verse did much to help him to a simpler and sincerer style, but blank verse is the appropriate vehicle for a dramatic or meditative synthesis, and cannot be continuously handled with success by a poet whose utterances remained so subjective as Coleridge's. Indeed the ability to manage blank verse is to some extent the measure of one's

poetical power, and to be compelled to relinquish it and look for a more suitable style ought to have convinced Coleridge of his subordinate poetical position and reconciled him to speculative and critical work.

In 1796, in his *Ode on the Departing Year*, he entered upon the third distinct stage in the evolution of his poetic form. In the ode he found the metrical form most free and untrammelled, lofty and impetuous in style, and capable of being metrically varied in harmony with the shifting emotions of the verse. One cannot but note the sublimity of verse cadence in

Departing year ! 'twas on no earthly shore
My soul beheld thy vision ! where alone,
Voiceless and stern, before the cloudy throne,
Aye memory sits : thy robe inscribed with gore,
With many an unimaginable groan
Thou storied'st thy sad hours ! Silence ensued
Deep silence o'er the ethereal multitude,
Whose locks with wreaths, whose wreaths with glories shone.

The difference between his earlier style and his later and more characteristic manner is not a greater severity of diction, a less abundant imagery, or a less sonorous rhythm. The diction is as copious and picturesque, the imagery as gorgeous and the verse as sonorous, but these elements are even more completely under the control of the poet.

After 1802 there is a regular and rapid deterioration in Coleridge's poetical powers. Creative impulses fade ; his mind busies itself with analytic, discursive and metaphysical thought ; at rare intervals he made excursions into the realms of poetry, as in *Youth and Age*, catching but faint after-glows of his early spirit.

THE VALUE OF HIS WORK.

Coleridge's poetry of nature comes nearest Wordsworth's, and yet there is a clear and well-defined distinction between the two men. Coleridge has Wordsworth's sense of an immanent spirit, manifesting itself in nature and in the life of man :

And what if all of animated nature
Be but organic harps diversely framed,
That tremble into thought, as o'er them sweeps
Plastic and vast, one intellectual breeze,
At once the soul of each and God of all?

His eye for form and colour is quite as sensitive as Wordsworth's :

The thin grey cloud is spread on high,
It covers, but not hides the sky ;
The moon is behind and at the full,
And yet she looks both small and dull,

his feeling for the calm oblivious tendencies of things, the silent ministries of dew and frost quite as strong :

A balmy night ! and though the stars be dim
Yet let us think upon the vernal showers
That gladden the green earth and we shall feel
A pleasure in the dimness of the stars.

He goes beyond Wordsworth in his perception of the weird and magical element in nature :

A green and silent spot, amid the hills,
A small and silent dell ! o'er stiller place
The singing skylark never poised himself.
The hills are heathy, save that swelling slope,
Which hath a gay and gorgeous covering on,
All golden with the never bloomless furze,
Which now blooms most profusely ; but the dell,
Bathed by the mist, is fresh and delicate
As vernal cornfield, or the unripe flax,
When, through its half-transparent stalks, at eve,

The level sunshine glimmers with green light.

.

The gust that roared and died away

In the distant tree ;

. heard and only heard

In this low dell, bowed not the delicate grass.

But the very passages in which he surpasses Wordsworth prove his inferiority. Beautiful as Coleridge's aerial and magical treatment of nature often undoubtedly is, we feel that he is distorting nature by his own subjectivity, that the aerialness and magic as described exist not in nature but in the feeling of the poet, that in short he does not interpret but forces or reavis a meaning into nature. Wordsworth's readings are so unegoistic as to be transcripts rather than studies, what we should all hear were we to discipline our spirit as Wordsworth did, and lean our ear as patiently as he has done to catch the significance of things. Coleridge, full of his Kantian and Fichtean idealisms, made nature merely the immense shadow of man :

O Lady ! we receive but what we give,
And in our life alone doth nature live ;
Ours is her wedding-garment, ours her shroud !

To Wordsworth she had an independent and objective existence, furnishing, in the spectacle of her silent and orderly processes, a curb and check upon the tumult and misrule of man's life.

Coleridge's view of human life was wider and more sympathetic than Wordsworth's. He had greater dramatic power, and entered with the sympathy of complete understanding into situations that Wordsworth could scarcely conceive of, and saw good in characters whom the latter would have

judged hopelessly depraved. He was more in sympathy, too, with the past efforts of the race, and with the literary and artistic interests of his own time. His mind was richer, more varied, more widely assimilative than Wordsworth's, but its meditative depth was not so great. There are no lines in Coleridge with anything like the pregnancy of Wordsworth's best utterances.

But it is not by his poetry that Coleridge must be finally judged: his critical work is a more abiding source of stimulus and help. In the example of his persistent effort to reduce all his reading and observing to a single principle we have a legacy more valuable than all he has left us in poetry. The need which he was called to supply—it is unfortunate that he did not more frankly and fully recognize his call and save much loss of energy—was the need of criticism, the need of a new synthesis to replace the old feudal synthesis which the destructive analysis of the 18th century had broken down.

Born in 1772, Coleridge arrived at manhood in the closing decade of the 18th century. The 18th century was an age of scepticism. All the great men at the close of the century were engaged in a destructive criticism of the ideas on which society was then supposed to rest. Volney and Voltaire in France, and Gibbon and Hume in England, directed their logic against the divine right of kings and the superstitions and conventional creeds which were then believed to be inseparable from Christianity. No one would now deny that in attacking the irrational growths with which religion and society were then overburdened, these acute but shallow thinkers did good service, or would find it difficult to understand why they should

have attracted for a time all the young and generous spirits who looked upon the old and established as a hindrance to the realization of their schemes of social regeneration. But the overthrow of the false and irrational involved the loss of much that was genuine, and after the terrible upheaval of the French Revolution men moved about as in a dismantled world. The crazy old edifice of feudal loyalty and mediæval religion, endeared to multitudes of men by its antiquity and its having been the abiding place of their fathers, lay in ruins about them. We know what follows in such cases, "disappointed hopes, moral exhaustion, enthusiasm burnt to ashes, the melancholy of discovered illusions and the remorse and yearning that follow a supreme work of destruction." Men of scientific mind dropped visions and concerned themselves with the pursuit of practical ends, others like Shelley or Byron stubbornly refused to admit their disappointment, and remained to the end exponents of the Revolution. Another class, like Wordsworth, withdrew from practical concerns and concentrated themselves on a poetry of nature or sentiment, others again were possessed, like the men of the Oxford movement, with a pathetic and impotent yearning for the irrecoverable past which the Revolution had swept away.

Certain rare spirits like Coleridge strove to bring unity to their time, to knit up the ravelled sleeve of thought, to build up faith and loyalty again on a more permanent basis. To do this they endeavoured to understand the world in which they found themselves placed, believing with Arnold that the mere desire to learn and know the truth even for our own personal satisfaction was a beginning to make it prevail, a preparing the

way for that which always served this, and that this desire was wrongly therefore stamped with blame absolutely in itself, and not only in its caricature and degeneration. What will, therefore, remain forever a source of stimulus in Coleridge's work, is his perception of England's comparatively greater need, in the earlier years of this century, for culture, for criticism, than for poetry, and his persistent effort to supply that need. Comprehend this need, which is indeed our own need, the need of Canada, where so many people run prematurely into poetry, comprehend his belief, repeated in numberless forms, that knowledge is power, moral power, and his effort to spread the light, and we have the clue to all his work. Many people make much of his grand distinction between subject and object, phenomena, and things in themselves, understanding and reason, fancy and imagination, and indeed it does appear in all his thinking; in his criticism of poetry as the distinction between fancy and the imagination, and in philosophy and religion as the distinction between truths of science and truths of revelation or faith. It is this distinction that enables him to accept the results of science along with a belief in a conventional religion which he had once doubted. But the distinction will not permanently stand. Modern philosophy rejects Coleridge's distinction between phenomena which we can know and the real things behind the veil which we can only apprehend through faith, as fundamentally unsound and atheistical. Modern theology finds it daily more difficult to maintain its belief in the special sanctity of particular places, objects or things. Even criticism in which Coleridge's native taste enabled him to get great results from an inadequate theory, as

the earlier astronomers were able to predict eclipses by means of the Ptolemaic hypothesis, rejects his distinction between fancy and imagination, understanding and reason, as separate faculties rather than different degrees of the same faculty, and makes Wordsworth's dictum rather its guiding principle—"poetry is the finer expression which is in the face of all science." What will stand of Coleridge, however, is "the stimulus of his continual effort, not a moral effort, for he had no morals, but of his continual instinctive effort crowned often with rich success to get at and lay bare the real truth of the matter in hand, whether that matter were literary, or philosophical, or political, or religious, and this in a country where, at that moment, such an effort was almost unknown, where the most powerful minds, Wordsworth, Shelley, Byron, threw themselves upon poetry which conveys truth indeed, but conveys it indirectly, and where ordinary minds are so habituated to do without thinking altogether, to regard considerations of established routine and practical convenience as paramount, that any attempt to introduce within the domain of these the disturbing element of thought, they were prompt to resent as outrage."

France, that wrought such destruction in our feudal habits of loyalty, and our mediæval ideas of religion, made an impotent attempt in Rousseauism to re-establish our faith, but it was reserved for Germany, deep-thinking, indefatigable Germany, to give us a rational basis for belief. Germany was enabled thus to become the intellectual guide of the modern world, through a great previous critical effort, and Goethe was one of the new movement's most important organs. If Vol-

taire may be regarded as the modern Mephistopheles, Goethe is the Earth Spirit who builds again the beautiful world.

Coleridge's great usefulness lay in his recognizing the importance of German thought, and in his attempt to domesticate it, or in his supplying in England for many years, and under critical circumstances, by the spectacle of this effort of his, a stimulus to all minds capable of profiting by it; and his action will be felt as long as the need for it continues. Coleridge constantly regretted his scanty poetical production, and his over-attention to criticism and philosophy, but that only proves either that it is the last infirmity of noble minds to yearn for what they have not, or that a man, even a great man, is incapable of properly valuing his own work. England needed criticism then as yet, and Coleridge supplied it.

THE RIME OF THE ANCIENT MARINER.

IN SEVEN PARTS.

“Facile credo, plures esse Naturas invisibiles quam visibiles in rerum universitate. Sed horum omnium familiam quis nobis enarrabit, et gradus et cognationes et discrimina et singulorum munera? Quid agunt? Quæ loca habitant? Harum rerum notitiam semper ambivit ingenium humanum, nunquam attigit. Juvat, interea, non diffiteor, quandoque in animo, tanquam in tabulâ, majoris et melioris mundi imaginem contemplari; ne mens assuefacta hodiernæ vitæ minutis se contrahat nimis, et tota subsidat in pusillas cogitationes. Sed veritati interea invigilandum est, modusque servandus, ut certa ab incertis, diem a nocte, distinguamus.”—T. BURNET, *Archæol. Phil.* p. 68.

PART I.

An ancient
Mariner meet-
eth three Gal-
lants bidden to
a wedding-feast,
and detaineth
one.

It is an ancient Mariner,

And he stoppeth one of three.

“By thy long gray beard and glittering eye,
Now wherefore stopp'st thou me?

“The Bridegroom's doors are opened wide, 5
And I am next of kin;
The guests are met, the feast is set:
May'st hear the merry din.”

He holds him with his skinny hand,
“There was a ship,” quoth he. 10
“Hold off! unhand me, gray-beard loon!”
Eftsoons his hand dropt he.

The Wedding-
Guest is spoil-
bound by the
eye of the old
seafaring man,
and constrained
to hear his tale.

He holds him with his glittering eye—
The Wedding-Guest stood still,
And listens like a three years' child: 15
The Mariner hath his will.

The Wedding-Guest sat on a stone :
 He cannot choose but hear ;
 And thus spake on that ancient man,
 The bright-eyed Mariner:— 20

“The ship was cheered, the harbour cleared,
 Merrily did we drop
 Below the kirk, below the hill,
 Below the lighthouse top.

The Mariner
 tells how the
 ship sailed
 southward with
 a good wind and
 fair weather, till
 it reached the
 line.

“The sun came up upon the left, 25
 Out of the sea came he !
 And he shone bright, and on the right
 Went down into the sea.

“Higher and higher every day,
 Till over the mast at noon”— 30
 The Wedding-Guest here beat his breast,
 For he heard the loud bassoon.

The Wedding-
 Guest heareth
 the bridal
 music ; but the
 Mariner con-
 tinueth his tale.

The bride hath paced into the hall,
 Red as a rose is she ;
 Nodding their heads before her goes 35
 The merry minstrelsy.

The Wedding-Guest he beat his breast,
 Yet he cannot choose but hear ;
 And thus spake on that ancient man,
 The bright-eyed Mariner. 40

The ship drawn
 by a storm
 towards the
 south pole.

“And now the storm-blast came, and he
 Was tyrannous and strong :
 He struck with his o’ertaking wings,
 And chased us south along.

With sloping masts and dipping prow, 45
 As who pursued with yell and blow
 Still treads the shadow of his foe,
 And forward bends his head,
 The ship drove fast, loud roared the blast,
 And southward aye we fled. 50

And now there came both mist and snow,
 And it grew wondrous cold :
 And ice, mast-high, came floating by,
 As green as emerald.

The land of ice,
 and of fearful
 sounds, where
 no living thing
 was to be seen.

And through the drifts, the snowy clifts 55
 Did send a dismal sheen :
 Nor shapes of men nor beasts we ken—
 The ice was all between.

The ice was here, the ice was there,
 The ice was all around : 60
 It cracked and growled, and roared and howled,
 Like noises in a swound !

Till a great sea-
 bird, called the
 Albatross, came
 through the
 snow-fog, and
 was received
 with great joy
 and hospitality.

At length did cross an Albatross :
 Thorough the fog it came ;
 As if it had been a Christian soul,
 We hailed it in God's name. 65

It ate the food it ne'er had eat,
 And round and round it flew.
 The ice did split with a thunder-fit ;
 The helmsman steered us through ! 70

And lo ! the
 Albatross
 proveth a bird
 of good omen,
 and followeth
 the ship as it
 returned north-
 ward through
 fog and floating
 ice.

And a good south wind sprung up behind ;
 The Albatross did follow,
 And every day, for food or play,
 Came to the mariners' hollo !

In mist or cloud, on mast or shroud, 75
 It perched for vespers nine ;
 Whiles all the night, through fog-smoke white,
 Glimmered the white moon-shine."

The ancient
 Mariner inhospitably
 killeth the pious bird
 of good omen.

"God save thee, ancient Mariner,
 From the fiends that plague thee thus !— 80
 Why look'st thou so?"—"With my cross-bow
 I shot the Albatross!"

PART II.

The sun now rose upon the right :
 Out of the sea came he,
 Still hid in mist, and on the left 85
 Went down into the sea.

And the good south wind still blew behind,
 But no sweet bird did follow,
 Nor any day for food or play
 Came to the mariners' hollo! 90

His shipmates
 cry out against
 the ancient
 Mariner, for
 killing the bird
 of good luck.

And I had done a hellish thing,
 And it would work 'em woe ;
 For all averred, I had killed the bird
 That made the breeze to blow.
 Ah wretch ! said they, the bird to slay, 95
 That made the breeze to blow !

But when the
 fog cleared off,
 they justify the
 same, and thus
 make them-
 selves accom-
 plices in the
 crime.

Nor dim nor red, like God's own head,
 The glorious Sun uprist :
 Then all averred, I had killed the bird
 That brought the fog and mist. 100
 'Twas right, said they, such birds to slay,
 That bring the fog and mist.

The fair breeze
continues; the
ship enters the
Pacific Ocean,
and sails north-
ward, even till it
reaches the Line.

The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew,
The furrow followed free;
We were the first that ever burst
Into that silent sea.

105

The ship hath
been suddenlv
becalm'd.

Down dropt the breeze, the sails dropt down,
'Twas sad as sad could be;
And we did speak only to break
The silence of the sea!

110

All in a hot and copper sky,
The bloody Sun, at noon,
Right up above the mast did stand,
No bigger than the Moon.

Day after day, day after day,
We stuck, nor breath nor motion;
As idle as a painted ship
Upon a painted ocean.

115

And the Alba-
tross begins to
be avenged.

Water, water, everywhere,
And all the boards did shrink;
Water, water, everywhere,
Nor any drop to drink.

120

The very deep did rot: O Christ!
That ever this should be!
Yea, slimy things did crawl with legs
Upon the slimy sea.

125

A spirit had fol-
low'd them;
one of the in-
visible inhabi-
tants of this
planet, neither

About, about, in reel and rout
The death-fires danced at night;
The water, like a witch's oils,
Burnt green and blue and white.

130

departed souls
nor angels ;
concerning
whom the
learned Jew,
Josephus, and
the Platonic
Constantinopo-
litan, Michael
Psellus, may be
consulted.
They are very
numerous, and
there is no cli-
mate or element
without one or
more.

The shipmates,
in their sore
distress would
fain throw the
whole guilt on
the ancient
Mariner; in sign
whereof they
hang the dead
sea-bird round
his neck.

And some in dreams assured were
Of the spirit that plagued us so ;
Nine fathom deep he had followed us
From the land of mist and snow.

And every tongue, through utter drought, 137
Was withered at the root ;
We could not speak, no more than if
We had been choked with soot.

Ah ! well a-day ! what evil looks 140
Had I from old and young !
Instead of the Cross, the Albatross
About my neck was hung.

PART III.

There passed a weary time. Each throat
Was parched, and glazed each eye.
A weary time ! a weary time ! .45
How glazed each weary eye !
When looking westward, I beheld
A something in the sky.

The ancient
Mariner behold-
eth a sign in the
element afar off.

At first it seemed a little speck,
And then it seemed a mist : 150
It moved and moved, and took at last
A certain shape, I wist.

A speck, a mist, a shape, I wist !
And still it neared and neared :
And as if it dodged a water-sprite, 155
It plunged, and tacked, and veered.

At its nearer
approach, it
seemeth him to

With throats unslaked, with black lips baked,
We could nor laugh nor wail ;

be a ship; and
at a dear ran-
som he freeth
his speech from
the bonds of
thirst.

Through utter drought all dumb we stood !
I bit my arm, I sucked the blood,
And cried, A sail ! a sail !

160

With throats unslaked, with black lips baked,
Agape they heard me call :
Gramercy ! they for joy did grin,
And all at once their breath drew in,
As they were drinking all.

165

And horror fol-
lows ; for can it
be a ship that
comes onward
without wind
or tide ?

See ! see ! (I cried) she tacks no more !
Hither to work us weal ;
Without a breeze, without a tide,
She steadies with upright keel !

170

The western wave was all a-flame,
The day was well-nigh done !
Almost upon the western wave
Rested the broad bright sun ;
When that strange shape drove suddenly
Betwixt us and the sun.

175

It seemeth him
but the skele-
ton of a ship.

And straight the sun was flecked with bars,
(Heaven's Mother send us grace !)
As if through a dungeon-grate he peered
With broad and burning face.

180

Alas ! (thought I, and my heart beat loud)
How fast she nears and nears !
Are those *her* sails that glance in the Sun,
Like restless gossameres ?

And its ribs are
seen as bars on
the face of the
setting sun.
The spectre-
woman and her

Are those *her* ribs through which the Sun
Did peer, as through a grate ?
And is that Woman all her crew ?

185

death-mate,
and no other
on board the
skeleton ship.
Like vessel, like
crew !

Is that a Death ? and are there two ?
Is Death that woman's mate ?

Her lips were red, her looks were free, 190
Her locks were yellow as gold :
Her skin was as white as leprosy,
The Night-mare Life-in-Death was she,
Who thicks man's blood with cold.

Death and Life-
in-Death have
diced for the
ship's crew, and
she (the latter)
winneth the
ancient Marin-
er.

The naked hulk alongside came, 195
And the twain were casting dice ;
"The game is done ! I've won, I've won !"
Quoth she, and whistles thrice.

No twilight
within the
courts of the
wall.

The Sun's rim dips ; the stars rush out :
At one stride comes the dark ; 200
With far-heard whisper, o'er the sea,
Off shot the spectre-bark.

At the rising of
the moon.

We listened and looked sideways up !
Fear at my heart, as at a cup,
My life-blood seemed to sip ! 205
The stars were dim, and thick the night,
The steerman's face by his lamp gleamed white ;
From the sails the dew did drip—
Till clomb above the eastern bar
The horned Moon, with one bright star 210
Within the nether tip.

One after
another.

One after one, by the star-dogged Moon,
Too quick for groan or sigh,
Each turned his face with a ghastly pang,
And cursed me with his eye. 215

His shipmates
drop down
dead.

Four times fifty living men,
(And I heard nor sigh nor groan)
With heavy thump, a lifeless lump,
They dropped down one by one.

But Life-in-
Death begins
her work on the
ancient Mariner.

The souls did from their bodies fly,—
They fled to bliss or woe!
And every soul, it passed me by,
Like the whizz of my cross-bow!

220

PART IV.

The Wedding-
guest feareth
that a spirit is
talking to him.

"I fear thee, ancient Mariner!
I fear thy skinny hand!
And thou art long, and lank, and brown,
As is the ribbed sea-sand.

225

I fear thee and thy glittering eye,
And thy skinny hand so brown."—

But the ancient
Mariner as-
sureth him of
his bodily life,
and proceedeth
to relate his
horrible pen-
ance.

Fear not, fear not, thou Wedding-Guest!
'This body dropt not down.

230

Alone, alone, all all alone,
Alone on a wide wide sea!
And never a saint took pity on
My soul in agony.

235

He despiseth
the creatures of
the calm.

The many men, so beautiful!
And they all dead did lie:
And a thousand thousand slimy things
Lived on; and so did I.

And envieth
that they should
live, and so
many lie dead.

I looked upon the rotting sea,
And drew my eyes away;
I looked upon the rotting deck,
And there the dead men lay.

240

I looked to heaven, and tried to pray
 But or ever a prayer had gusht, 245
 A wicked whisper came, and made
 My heart as dry as dust.

I closed my lids, and kept them close,
 And the balls like pulses beat ;
 For the sky and the sea, and the sea and the sky. 250
 Lay like a load on my weary eye,
 And the dead were at my feet.

But the curse
 liveth for him
 in the eye of
 the dead men.

The cold sweat melted from their limbs,
 Nor rot nor reek did they :
 The look with which they looked on me 255
 Had never passed away.

An orphan's curse would drag to hell
 A spirit from on high ;
 But oh ! more horrible than that

In his loneliness
 and fixedness
 he yearneth to-
 wards the
 journeying
 moon, and the
 stars that still
 sojourn, yet still
 move onward ;
 and everywhere
 the blue sky be-
 longs to them,
 and is their
 appointed rest,
 and their native
 country and
 their own
 natural homes,
 which they enter
 unannounced,
 as lords that are
 certainly ex-
 pected, and yet
 there is a silent
 joy at their
 arrival.

Is the curse in a dead man's eye ! 260
 Seven days, seven nights, I saw that curse,
 And yet I could not die.

The moving moon went up the sky,
 And nowhere did abide :
 Softly she was going up, 265
 And a star or two beside—

Her beams bemock'd the sultry main,
 Like April hoar-frost spread ;
 But where the ship's huge shadow lay,
 The charmed water burnt alway 270
 A still and awful red.

By the light of
the Moon he be-
holdeth God's
creatures of the
great calm.

Beyond the shadow of the ship,
I watched the water-snakes :
They moved in tracks of shining white,
And when they reared, the elfish light
Fell off in hoary flakes.

275

Within the shadow of the ship
I watched their rich attire :
Blue, glossy green, and velvet black,
They coiled and swam ; and every track
Was a flash of golden fire.

280

Their beauty
and their
happiness.

O happy living things ! no tongue
Their beauty might declare :
A spring of love gushed from my heart,
And I blessed them unaware !
Sure my kind saint took pity on me,
And I blessed them unaware.

285

He blesseth
them in his
heart.

The spell begins
to break.

The selfsame moment I could pray ;
And from my neck so free
The Albatross fell off, and sank
Like lead into the sea.

290

PART V.

O sleep ! it is a gentle thing,
Beloved from pole to pole !
To Mary Queen the praise be given !
She sent the gentle sleep from Heaven,
That slid into my soul.

295

By grace of the
holy Mother,
the ancient
Mariner is re-
freshed with
rain.

The silly buckets on the deck,
That had so long remained,
I dreamt that they were filled with dew ;
And when I awoke, it rained.

300

My lips were wet, my throat was cold,
 My garments all were dank ;
 Sure I had drunken in my dreams,
 And still my body drank.

I moved, and could not feel my limbs : 305
 I was so light—almost
 I thought that I had died in sleep,
 And was a blessed ghost.

He heareth
 sounds and
 seeth strange
 sights and com-
 motions in the
 sky and the ele-
 ment.

And soon I heard a roaring wind :
 It did not come anear ; 310
 But with its sound it shook the sails,
 That were so thin and sere.

The upper air burst into life !
 And a hundred fire-flags sheen,
 To and fro they were hurried about ! 315
 And to and fro, and in and out,
 The wan stars danced between.

And the coming wind did roar more loud,
 And the sails did sigh like sedge ;
 And the rain poured down from one black cloud : 320
 The moon was at its edge.

The thick black cloud was cleft, and still
 The moon was at its side :
 Like waters shot from some high crag,
 The lightning fell with never a jag, 325
 A river steep and wide.

The bodies of
 the ship's crew
 are inspirited,
 and the ship
 moves on ;

The loud wind never reached the ship,
 Yet now the ship moved on !
 Beneath the lightning and the moon
 The dead men gave a groan. 330

They groaned, they stirred, they all uprose,
Nor spake, nor moved their eyes ;
It had been strange, even in a dream,
To have seen those dead men rise.

The helmsman steered ; **the ship** moved on ; 335
Yet never a breeze up-blew ;
The mariners all 'gan work the ropes,
Where they were wont to do ;
They raised their limbs like lifeless tools—
We were a ghastly crew. 340

The body of my brother's son
Stood by me, knee to knee :
The body and I pulled at one rope,
But he said nought to me.

but not by the
souls of the
men, nor by de-
mons of earth
or middle air,
but by a blessed
troop of angelic
spirits, sent
down by the in-
vocation of the
guardian saint.

" I fear thee, ancient Mariner ! " 345
Be calm thou Wedding-Guest !
'Twas not those souls that fled in pain,
Which to their corsers came again,
But a troop of spirits blest :

For when it dawned—they dropped their arms, 350
And cluster'd round the mast ;
Sweet sounds rose slowly through their mouths,
And from their bodies passed.

Around, around, flew each sweet sound,
Then darted to the sun ; 355
Slowly the sounds came back again,
Now mixed, now one by one.

Sometimes a-dropping from the sky
I heard the sky-lark sing ;
Sometimes all little birds that are, 360

How they seemed to fill the sea and air
With their sweet jargoning !

And now 'twas like all instruments,
Now like a lonely flute ;
And now it is an angel's song, 365
That makes the heavens be mute.

It ceased ; yet still the sails made on
A pleasant noise till noon,
A noise like of a hidden brook
In the leafy month of June, 370
That to the sleeping woods all night
Singeth a quiet tune.

Till noon we quietly sailed on,
Yet never a breeze did breathe :
Slowly and smoothly went the ship, 375
Moved onward from beneath.

The lonesome
spirit from the
south pole
carries on the
ship as far as the
line, in obedi-
ence to the an-
gelic troop, but
still requireth
vengeance.

Under the keel nine fathom deep,
From the land of mist and snow,
The spirit slid ; and it was he
That made the ship to go. 380
The sails at noon left off their tune,
And the ship stood still also.

The sun, right up above the mast,
Had fixed her to the ocean ;
But in a minute she 'gan stir, 385
With a short uneasy motion—
Backwards and forwards half her length
With a short uneasy motion.

Then like a pawing horse let go,
She made a sudden bound : 390

It flung the blood into my head,
And I fell down in a swoond.

The Polar Spirit's fellow-demons, the invisible inhabitants of the element, take part in his wrong; and two of them relate, one to the other, that penance long and heavy for the ancient Mariner hath been accorded to the Polar Spirit, who returneth southward.

How long in that same fit I lay,

I have not to declare;

But ere my living life returned,

I heard, and in my soul discerned,

Two voices in the air.

395

"Is it he!" quoth one, "Is this the man?

By Him who died on cross,

With his cruel bow he laid full low

The harmless Albatross.

400

"The spirit who bideth by himself

In the land of mist and snow,

He loved the bird that loved the man

Who shot him with his bow."

405

The other was a softer voice,

As soft as honey-dew:

Quoth he, "The man hath penance done,

And penance more will do."

PART VI.

FIRST VOICE.

But tell me, tell me! speak again,

410

Thy soft response renewing—

What makes that ship drive on so fast?

What is the Ocean doing?

SECOND VOICE.

Still as a slave before his lord,

The Ocean hath no blast;

415

His great bright eye most silently

Up to the moon is cast—

If he may know which way to go ;
 For she guides him smooth or grim.
 See, brother, see! how graciously
 She looketh down on him. 420

FIRST VOICE.

The Mariner
 hath been cast
 into a trance ;
 for the angelic
 power causeth
 the vessel to
 drive northward
 faster than
 human life
 could endure.

But why drives on that ship so fast,
 Without or wave or wind ?

SECOND VOICE.

The air is cut away before,
 And closes from behind. 425

Fly, brother, fly! more high, more high!
 Or we shall be belated :
 For slow and slow that ship will go,
 When the Mariner's trance is abated.

The super-
 natural motion
 is retarded ; the
 Mariner awakes,
 and his penance
 begins anew.

I woke, and we were sailing on 430
 As in a gentle weather :
 'Twas night, calm night, the moon was high ;
 The dead men stood together.

All stood together on the deck,
 For a charnel-dungeon fitter : 435
 All fixed on me their stony eyes,
 That in the moon did glitter.

The pang, the curse, with which they died,
 Had never passed away :
 I could not draw my eyes from theirs, 440
 Nor turn them up to pray.

The curse is
 finally expiated

And now this spell was snapt : once more
 I viewed the ocean green,
 And looked far forth, yet little saw
 Of what had else been seen— 445

Like one, that on a lonesome road
 Doth walk in fear and dread,
 And having once turned round, walks on,
 And turns no more his head ;
 Because he knows a frightful fiend
 Doth close behind him tread.

450

But soon there breathed a wind on me,
 Nor sound nor motion made :
 Its path was not upon the sea,
 In ripple or in shade.

155

It raised my hair, it fanned my cheek
 Like a meadow-gale of spring—
 It mingled strangely with my fears,
 Yet it felt like a welcoming.

Swiftly, swiftly flew the ship,
 Yet she sailed softly too :
 Sweetly, sweetly blew the breeze—
 On me alone it blew.

460

And the ancient
 Mariner behold-
 eth his native
 country.

Oh ! dream of joy ! is this indeed
 The lighthouse top I see ?
 Is this the hill ? is this the kirk ?
 Is this mine own countree ?

165

We drifted o'er the harbour-bar,
 And I with sobs did pray—
 'O let me be awake, my God !
 Or let me sleep alway.'

470

The harbour-bay was clear as glass,
 So smoothly it was strewn !
 And on the bay the moonlight lay,
 And the shadow of the moon.

475

The rock shone bright, the kirk no less,
That stands above the rock :
The moonlight steeped in silentness
The steady weathercock.

And the bay was white with silent light, 480
Till rising from the same,

The angello
spirits leave the
dead bodies,

Full many shapes, that shadows were,
In crimson colours came.

and appear in
their own forms
of light.

A little distance from the prow 485
Those crimson shadows were :
I turned my eyes upon the deck—
Oh Christ ! what saw I there !

Each corse lay flat, lifeless and flat,
And, by the holy rood !
A man all light, a seraph-man, 490
On every corse there stood.

This seraph-band, each waved his hand :
It was a heavenly sight !
They stood as signals to the land,
Each one a lovely light ; 495

This seraph-band, each waved his hand :
No voice did they impart—
No voice ; but oh ! the silence sank
Like music on my heart.

But soon I heard the dash of oars, 500
I heard the Pilot's cheer ;
My head was turned perforce away,
And I saw a boat appear.

The Pilot and the Pilot's boy,
 I heard them coming fast : 505
 Dear Lord in Heaven ! it was a joy
 The dead men could not blast.

I saw a third—I heard his voice :
 It is the Hermit good !
 He singeth loud his godly hymns 510
 That he makes in the wood.
 He'll shrieve my soul, he'll wash away
 The Albatross's blood.

PART VII.

The Hermit of
 the wood

This Hermit good lives in that wood
 Which slopes down to the sea. 515
 How loudly his sweet voice he rears !
 He loves to talk with marineres
 That come from a far countree.

He kneels at morn, and noon, and eve—
 He hath a cushion plump : 520
 It is the moss that wholly hides
 The rotted old oakstump.

The skiff-boat neared : I heard them talk,
 " Why, this is strange, I trow !
 Where are those lights so many and fair, 525
 That signal made but now ? "

approacheth the
 ship with
 wonder.

" Strange, by my faith ! " the Hermit said—
 " And they answered not our cheer !
 The planks look warped ! and see those sails,
 How thin they are and sere ! 530
 I never saw aught like to them,
 Unless perchance it were.

Brown skeletons of leaves that lag
 My forest-brook along ;
 When the ivy-tod is heavy with snow, 535
 And the owlet whoops to the wolf below,
 That eats the she-wolf's young."

"Dear Lord ! it hath a fiendish look—
 (The Pilot made reply)
 I am a-feared"—"Push on, push on !" 540
 Said the Hermit cheerily.

The boat came closer to the ship,
 But I nor spake nor stirred ;
 The boat came close beneath the ship,
 And straight a sound was heard. 545

The ship sud-
 denly sinketh.

Under the water it rumbled on,
 Still louder and more dread :
 It reached the ship, it split the bay ;
 The ship went down like lead.

The ancient
 Mariner is saved
 in the Pilot's
 boat.

Stunned by that loud and dreadful sound, 550
 Which sky and ocean smote,
 Like one that hath been seven days drowned
 My body lay afloat ;
 But swift as dreams, myself I found
 Within the Pilot's boat. 555

Upon the whirl where sank the ship,
 The boat spun round and round ;
 And all was still, save that the hill
 Was telling of the sound.

I moved my lips--the Pilot shrieked 560
 And fell down in a fit ;

The holy Hermit raised his eyes,
And prayed where he did sit.

I took the oars : the Pilot's boy,
Who now doth crazy go, 565
Laughed loud and long, and all the while
His eyes went to and fro.

"Ha! ha!" quoth he, "full plain I see
The Devil knows how to row."

And now, all in my own countree, 570
I stood on the firm land!
The Hermit stepped forth from the boat,
And scarcely he could stand.

The ancient
Mariner earnestly
entreateth
the Hermit to
shrieve him;
and the penance
of life falls on
him.

"O shrieve me, shrieve me, holy man!"
The Hermit crossed his brow. 575
"Say quick," quoth he, "I bid thee say—
What manner of man art thou!"

Forthwith this frame of mine was wrenched
With a woful agony,
Which forced me to begin my tale; 580
And then it left me free.

And ever and
anon through-
out his future
life an agony
constraineth
him to travel
from land to
land;

Since then, at an uncertain hour,
That agony returns :
And till my ghastly tale is told,
This heart within me burns. 585

I pass, like night, from land to land ;
I have strange power of speech ;
The moment that his face I see,
I know the man that must hear me :
To him my tale I teach. 590

What loud uproar bursts from that door !
 The wedding-guests are there :
 But in the garden-bower the bride
 And bride-maids singing are :
 And hark the little vesper bell, 595
 Which biddeth me to prayer !

O Wedding-guest ! this soul hath been
 Alone on a wide, wide sea :
 So lonely 'twas, that God himself
 Scarce seemed there to be. 600

O sweeter than the marriage feast,
 'Tis sweeter far to me,
 To walk together to the kirk
 With a goodly company !—

To walk together to the kirk, 605
 And all together pray,
 While each to his great Father bends,
 Old men, and babes, and loving friends,
 And youths and maidens gay !

and to teach, by
 his own ex-
 ample, love and
 reverence to all
 things that God
 made and lov-
 eth. Farewell, farewell ! but this I tell 610
 To thee, thou Wedding-Guest !
 He prayeth well who loveth well
 Both man and bird and beast.

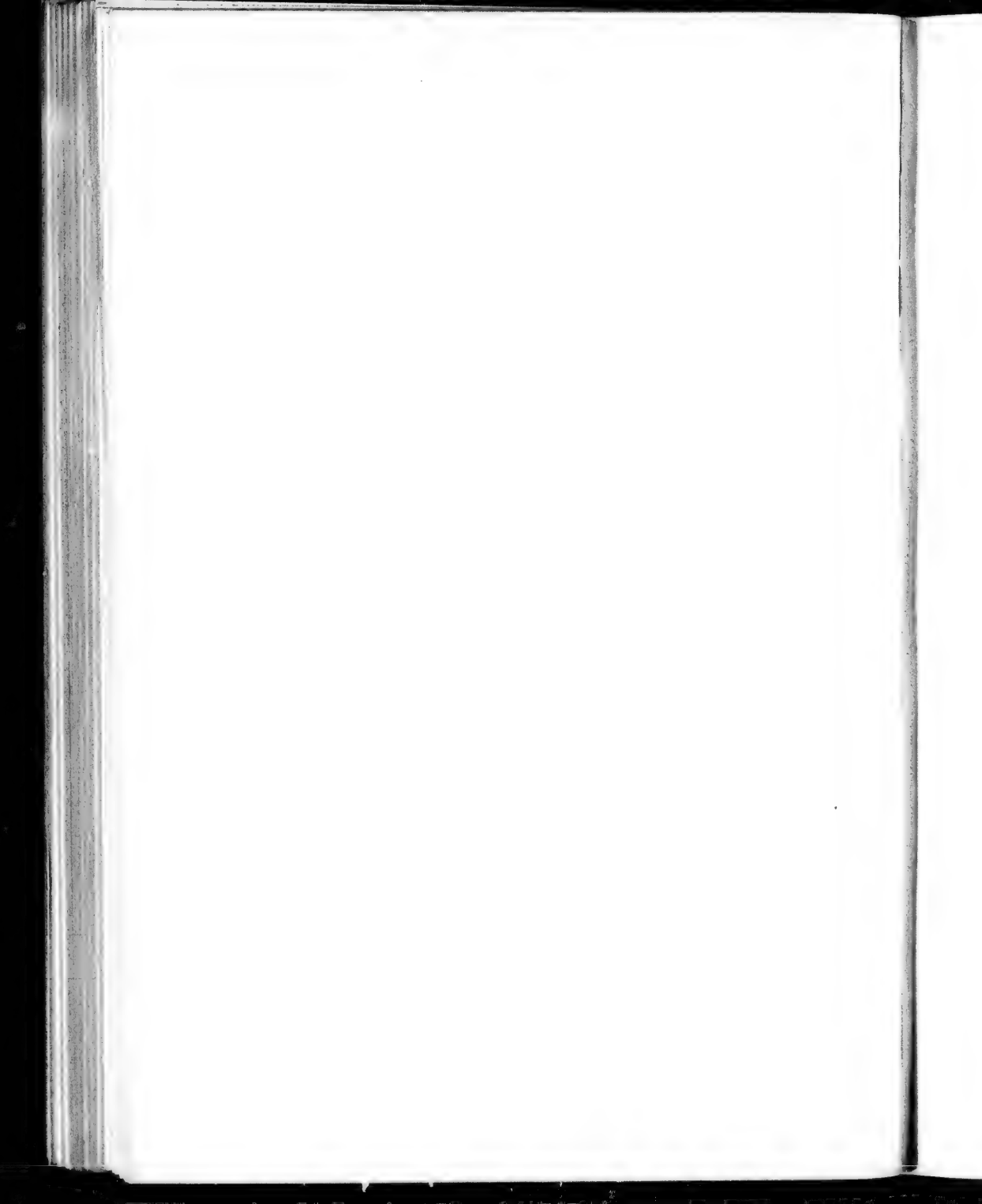
He prayeth best, who loveth best
 All things both great and small ; 615
 For the dear God who loveth us,
 He made and loveth all.

The Mariner, whose eye is bright,
 Whose beard with age is hoar,

Is gone: and now the Wedding-Guest 620
Turned from the bridegroom's door.

He went like one that hath been stunned,
And is of sense forlorn :
A sadder and a wiser man,
He rose the morrow morn. 625





SELECTION FROM COLERIDGE.

YOUTH AND AGE.

Verse, a breeze 'mid blossoms straying,
Where Hope clung feeding, like a bee—
Both were mine ! Life went a maying
 With Nature, Hope, and Poesy,
 When I was young ! 5

When I was young ?—Ah, woful when !
Ah ! for the change 'twixt Now and Then !
This breathing house not built with hands,
This body that does me grievous wrong,
O'er aery cliffs and glittering sands 10
How lightly then it flash'd along :—
Like those trim skiffs, unknown of yore,
On winding lakes and rivers wide,
That ask no aid of sail or oar,
That fear no spite of wind or tide ! 15
Nought cared this body for wind or weather
When Youth and I lived in't together.

Flowers are lovely ; Love is flower-like ;
Friendship is a sheltering tree ;
O ! the joys, that came down shower-like, 20
Of Friendship, Love, and Liberty,
 Ere I was old !

Ere I was old ? Ah woful Ere,
Which tells me, Youth's no longer here !
O Youth ! for years so many and sweet, 25
'Tis known that Thou and I were one,

I'll think it but a fond conceit—
It cannot be, that Thou art gone !
Thy vesper-bell hath not yet toll'd :—
And thou wert aye a masker bold ! 30
What strange disguise hast now put on
To make believe that Thou art gone ?
I see these locks in silvery slips,
This drooping gait, this alter'd size :
But Springtide blossoms on thy lips, 35
And tears take sunshine from thine eyes !
Life is but Thought : so think I will
That Youth and I are house-mates still.

Dew-drops are the gems of morning,
But the tears of mournful eve ! 40
Where no hope is, life's a warning
That only serves to make us grieve

When we are old :
—That only serves to make us grieve
With oft and tedious taking-leave, 45
Like some poor nigh-related guest
That may not rudely be dismiss,
Yet hath out-stay'd his welcome while,
And tells the jest without the smile.



NOTES ON COLERIDGE.

THE ANCIENT MARINER.

The *Rime of the Ancient Mariner* was written in the autumn of 1797, and published, as Coleridge's contribution to the joint volume of *Lyrical Ballads*, in the following year. During the two years of Coleridge's residence at Nether Stowey, his conversation with Wordsworth "frequently turned on the two cardinal points of poetry, the power of exciting the sympathy of the reader by a faithful adherence to the truth of nature, and the power of giving the interest of novelty by the modifying colours of imagination." In one of their many conversations on this subject the thought suggested itself that a series of poems might be composed, in some of which the incidents and agents might be, in part at least, supernatural, in others, chosen from ordinary life. Wordsworth undertook "to excite a feeling analogous to the supernatural by awakening the mind's attention from the lethargy of custom and directing it to the loveliness and wonders of the world before us," while Coleridge directed his efforts to transferring from our inward nature to persons and characters supernatural "a human interest and a semblance of truth sufficient to procure for these shadows of imagination that willing suspension of disbelief for the moment which constitutes poetic faith." Thus originated the plan of the *Lyrical Ballads*, for which Coleridge wrote the *Ancient Mariner* and began the *Dark Ladie* and *Christabel*.

The immediate occasion of the poem was a strange dream of one of Coleridge's friends, a Mr. Cruikshank, who fancied he saw coming into port a skeleton ship with spectre figures on

board. Many other ideas were added to this first simple suggestion, and nothing better illustrates Coleridge's omnivorous reading and widely assimilative mind than his skilful weaving into one complete and rounded whole of so many suggestions from such a variety of sources. From the Witches' Spell, Act 1, sc. iii, *Macbeth*, he seems to have obtained a hint of the "night-mare Life-in-Death," as well as of the phantom ship:

Sleep shall neither night or day
Hang upon his pent-house lid;
He shall live a man forbid:
Weary seven nights, nine times nine
Shall he dwindle, peak and pine.

From Shelvocke's *Voyage Round the World*, to which Wordsworth drew his attention, he seems to have taken the idea of man's ingratitude in slaying the bird and the world spirit's determination to avenge the wanton destruction of its creature. Wordsworth himself suggested the plan of reanimating the dead men to work the ship. Similar and perhaps more definite suggestions came to him from a rude Danish ballad, *A Wonderful Ballad of Seafaring Men*, and from the epistle of Bishop Paulinus of Nola to Macarius, wherein is mentioned the working of a vessel by a troop of angels. The conceptions of the "slimy sea," and of the "ice, mast-high," and of the "storm-blast, tyrannous and strong," were gathered—if we are to judge from marginal references in many note books—from various sources, —from Captain James' *Strange Voyage into the South Sea*, Cook's *Voyages*, Hakluyt's *Voyages*, and such out-of-the-way reading as the visions of Burnet and Purchas's *Pilgrims*. The subsequent wanderings of the mariner, his mental restlessness, his irresistible desire to impart his experiences were obviously suggested to Coleridge by the legend of the "Wandering Jew." Several details were suggested by Wordsworth, who also wrote a few lines, but the greater part

of the poem is Coleridge's invention, original in that highest sense of originality, which consists, not in inventing, but in using in a masterly way what is already available.

The poem is written in the ballad stanza, the structure and movement of which, however, Coleridge has very much modified. The choice of this form was owing partly to his compact with Wordsworth, partly to that revived interest in the past which since 1750 had been expressing itself in various ways, and partly to the suitability of the form itself.

After love and adventure, the most common theme of the older ballad and that which it most successfully rendered was the supernatural. Men's minds in the days when the folk songs originated were replete with wonder and mystery. They saw the beautiful, but always in the guise of the strange and weird, and frequently in the form of an allegory. The ballad springing from the living heart of the people has the excellencies and defects of the natural imagination. It was spontaneous, naïve and natural, often rapid and forcible, and again garrulous and childish, unreflective, but very suggestive and devoid of artifice or ornaments. In keeping with these characteristics of thought, the metrical form was simple—two couplets of tetrameters, or more frequently a quatrain of alternate tetrameters and trimeters. Rhyme often gave way to assonance, while alliteration might appear anywhere. The cadence was a simple rude harmony. Figures of speech were rare but fresh and unreflective, refrains and iterations were common, the number of feet was variable, accent and even pronunciation were freely modified on occasion. In this pleasing yet rude and narrow instrument Coleridge, so to speak, pulled out many more stops. By pruning its repetitions, heightening its diction, rendering its imagery more reflective and refining its rhythm, he made it capable of conveying exquisitely his delicately marvellous conception of the supernatural.

The literary value of the poem has been variously estimated, but all critics and commentators are agreed as to the simple realistic force of the narrative and the vividness of the imagery, and in allegorical poetry it certainly is a merit that the symbol should be definitely grasped, but should we not endeavour also to have an approximating definite conception of the thing symbolized? Arrogant and indolent dilettanteism refuses to inquire into the meaning of the poem, shielding itself behind Coleridge's reply to Mrs. Barbauld that the poem had too much moral in it. Surely it is strange reasoning that can extract from Coleridge's admission that the poem contained a moral, indeed too much moral, the inference that it has no moral at all. In the form of an allegory the poem is a profound criticism of life, and those who have felt this are nearer to the meaning of the poem, however much they may differ from one another in their interpretations, than those dilettante critics who retire into vague talk about beauty when the thought of the poem eludes their analysis.

The subject of the poem is the same as that of Goethe's *Faust*, though the more obvious and suggestive comparison is with Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus*; the struggle of a strong soul with the entanglements of sense and the final emergence, though bearing tokens of the conflict, into spiritual serenity. Joyous we set out in the morning of life, the world we think was made to supply our every wish as soon as it arises, from the very vitality of our nature we are hurried into excesses, moral coldness and discord ensue. From this we think to escape by quenching our better intimations, a lower state of moral degradation—a life-in-death—follows, in which the native force of the soul is all but lost. In our embers, however, is something that does live; our better nature reasserts itself, first in an awakened interest in the glories of colour, and then in a sympathy with animate things, our subjective isolation is broken up, and we become conscious of a moral

order of the universe in glad acquiescence with which we find peace and serenity.

THE RIME OF THE ANCIENT MARINER.

PART I.

"Rime" here means poem. Chaucer in the *Canterbury Tales* calls one tale *The Rym of Sir Thopaz*.

1. **Ancient Mariner.** "Ancient" means simply advanced in years. In conversation Coleridge would speak of the Mariner as the Old Navigator. It would be well to note here, as frequently throughout the poem, the weird effect produced by certain features of the poet's vocabulary.

2. **One of three.** Compare ll. 588-590. What numbers are met with throughout this ballad in the text itself and in its divisions? Why such numbers?

11. **loon** = a base fellow—now obsolete in this sense. Compare *Macbeth* v., 3:

Thou cream-faced loon—

12. **Eftsoons** = soon after.

13, 14. The Mariner's "glittering eye" expressed the spiritual agony that convulsed his being until his tale was told. Insight into the soul's workings won from a great spiritual crisis gave him strange powers of fascination.

15, 16. By Wordsworth.

21. Joyously he sets forth in life.

31, etc. Note the dramatic effect of the asides or interruptions so common in this poem.

32. **bassoon** = a deep-toned wind instrument of music.

33. Compare *Christabel*, II., 63-64:

The lovely maid and the lady tall
Are *pacing* both into the hall.

36. A body of minstrels. Compare the *Dark Ladie*:

But first the nodding minstrels go
With music meet for lordly bowers.

41. Amid the reckless buoyancies of youth are found excesses. Compare in a somewhat similar sense, Arnold's *Rugby Chapel*:

Then on the heights comes the storm,

Gloss—"drawn." Perhaps "driven" was intended.

55. **clifts**=cliffs. Did the snow-capped cliffs of ice send a dismal light through the drifting mist and snow? or did the green ice send the dismal light through the layers of drifted snow resting upon it?

57-62. Moral isolation—spiritual coldness and discord.

58. **all between**=all around,—between the ship and the open sea.

62. Like noises one hears when in a swoon.

63. A large aquatic bird with great breadth of wings and extraordinary powers of flight, often met with at great distances from land off the Cape of Good Hope or in Behring Straits. Introduction here suggested by Wordsworth.

The bird is but a "better intimation," an inner and divine voice that speaks to the benumbed soul.

76. **vespers**=evenings.

78. Examine closely into the poet's references to the great heavenly bodies and into his treatment of colours and sounds throughout this poem. Compare with similar references and treatments in the ordinary ballads.

81, 82. The Mariner would stifle this inner voice.

PART II.

91-4. Superstitious fears of sailors regarding the killing of stormy petrels, albatrosses and other birds.

98. **uprist**=uprose.

101. The shipmen, at first horrified, finally acquiesce in and share in the ungrateful act.

104. Altered in the edition of 1817 to:

The furrow streamed off free.

To the sailors on board the ship, which would be the more accurate description?

107. What does "dropt down" mean here? Compare l. 311.

108. A lower state of moral degradation follows. He looks with loathing upon the objective world (l. 123, etc.).

123-130. Poetical exaggeration—and yet "it is a well-known fact that winds and storms are important agents in keeping the ocean pure. In the hot latitudes a long period of dead calm gives opportunity for the development of innumerable gelatinous marine animals, many of which are phosphorescent; and their frail substance cannot resist the force of the waves, but is broken to pieces." Cook, in his *Voyages*, speaks of small gelatinous "sea-animals" swimming about on the surface of the ocean, emitting the brightest colours, pellucid, blue, sapphire, violet, green, etc.—and in the dark, glowing like fire.

127, etc. Compare *Macbeth*, i., 3:

The weird sisters, hand in hand,
Posters of the sea and land,
Thus do go about, about.

128. death-fires = corpse candles, dead men's candles or will-o'-the-wisps, as they were called among the superstitious. These are generally phosphorescent lights that appear to issue from houses or rise from the ground—a visible result of chemical action. They were believed to foretell death.

129. Oils burnt during the incantations of witches seem to have been mixed with such substances as would colour the flames and add to the mystery of the scene.

139-142. Loathing both himself and the great objective world, he is now haunted by the constant remembrance of his act.

Gloss. Josephus was a Jewish general and historian of the first century. Psellus, an authority on demonology, lived in Constantinople during the 11th century.

PART III.

Gloss. Note the use of "element" here and elsewhere for "air," or "sky," etc.

155. dodged. Not undignified in Coleridge's day.

164. Gramercy = grand merci = great thanks—an exclamation of joy and relief. In *Table Talk*, Coleridge says:—"I took the

thought of grinning for joy from my companion's remark to me when we had climbed to the top of Plinlimmon and were nearly dead with thirst. We could not speak from the constriction till we found a little puddle under a stone. He said to me, 'you grinned like an idiot.' He had done the same."

184. gossameres. The filmy cobweb-like network to be seen in summer weather.

193-4. The earliest edition read :

And she is far liker Death than he ;
Her flesh makes the still air cold.

Compare the two readings, pointing out the poetic significance of the change.

It has fancifully been thought that as Coleridge made the correction in ll. 193-4 later in life, when under the benumbing influence of his opium habits, the vague name "Night-mare Life-in-Death" was suggested by personal experiences. Compare with the ode, *Dejection*.

197. Lower he sinks. Life now is with him a Life-in-Death.

210-212. Such phenomena arouse the superstitious fears of sailors. It is denied that stars ever appear within the lower tip of the horned moon.

222. Every death reminds the Mariner of his crime. For this popular belief that a departing soul may at times be heard or seen, compare Tennyson's *Talking Oak* :

The gloomy brewer's (Cromwell's) soul
Went by me like a stork.

PART IV.

224-231. This interruption, so much in the manner of the popular ballad, relieves the monotony of the narrative, and indirectly reveals to us the effects upon the Mariner of his great mental sufferings.

226-7. By Wordsworth.

234-5. Compare ll. 286, 294, etc. What is the artistic purpose of these references or statements?

245. or ever = before ever.

246, etc. Loathing has grown more intense; degradation deeper. His moral powers are dead, and in his spiritual blindness, he cannot pray.

282. At last, he can reach no greater depths of moral degeneration. He longs for death.

264-6. Compare in effectiveness with ll. 471-9.

270-81. Compare note on ll. 123-130, "Watersnakes." "Captain Kingman, in lat. 8 deg., 46 min. S., long. 105 deg., 30 min. E., passed through a tract of water twenty-three miles in breadth and of unknown length so full of minute (and some not very minute) phosphorescent organisms as to present the aspect (at night) of a boundless plain covered with snow. Some of these animals were "serpents" of six inches in length, of transparent gelatinous consistency and very luminous. . . . The phosphorescence of the ocean prevails largely through the whole extent of the tropical seas and proceeds from a great variety of marine organisms—some soft and gelatinous, some minute crustacea, etc. . . . One of the most curious phases of phosphorescence is the appearance on the surface of calm or but little agitated water of luminous spaces of several square feet in area, shining fitfully and bounded by rectilinear or nearly rectilinear outlines, presenting irregular forms, across which the light flashes as if propagated rapidly along the surface."—Herschel's *Physical Geography*.

There are, of course, no real snakes in mid ocean.

282. The native force of the soul cannot be altogether lost. Faint gleams of the divine spark appear. He grows interested in the objective world, in the moon, the stars, the sky, the watersnakes; sympathy with animate nature enters his heart, and this sympathy atoning for his ruthless act, teaches him how to pray.

PART V.

292. See references in notes on Wordsworth's sonnet *To Sleep*, l. 13.

297. silly = useless, empty.

314. The electrical lights that shine in the air.

325. jag = prong, point or projection.

350. In the old ballads, visitors from the other world, ghosts, etc., always depart at dawn or at the cock-crow—often with song.

350-372. An excellent passage for a detailed study of the delicacy of Coleridge's imaginative touch and of the sweetness of his verse melody.

362. **jargon**=ordinarily, confused talk. In ballads, as here, it often denotes the chattering of birds.

369-372. The Mariner's thoughts turned longingly from the horrors of the sea to the sweet melodies of the land. Point out the rhythmic effect of the long stanza form. Examine into and justify other variations in this poem, in stanza and verse forms, in metrical foot and cadence.

383-390. At the magical hour of noon the vessel reached the equator, beyond which the lonesome spirit from the Polar regions could not go. Hither at the command of the angelic troop he had brought the ship, and now for a moment the vessel pauses, then under the influence of the Polar spirit's demand for vengeance, which vengeance the angelic troop will not consent to, the ship moves backwards and forwards. Finally a compromise is effected, and the Polar spirit leaves the vessel.

394. I am unable to tell.

395. **living**=conscious.

406. These voices represent justice and mercy.

407. **honey-dew**=a sweet substance found in minute drops on certain plants—a secretion from very small plant lice.

409. Man may not escape from spiritual conflicts and spiritual errors without the marks of the internal struggle. Penance must be exacted.

PART VI.

414-17. Compare Coleridge's *Osorio*:

Oh woman!

I have stood silent like a slave before thee!

and Sir John Davies' *Orchestra*:

For lo! the sea that fleets about the land,
And like a girdle clips her solid waist,
Music and measure both doth understand;
For his great chrystal eye is always cast
Up to the moon and on her fixed fast.

418-19. This refers to the moon's influence in the production of tides. What scientific law is referred to in ll. 424-5?

426-9. It may be imagined that the spirits have before them some celestial goal to reach and delay would render their arrival inopportune.

James, in his *Voyage to the South Sea*, speaks of a common artifice among Spanish and Portuguese sailors, lately returned from an unsuccessful voyage towards the Pole, to conceal their ignorance of the realities of the Polar regions by mysterious whisperings of dreams, trances, supernatural interferences, under the influence of which they were driven northwards.

435. **charnel-dungeon.** A vault beneath or near a church, wherein were deposited the bones of the long-since dead.

448-51. Coleridge, says Whipple, gives in this passage poetic expression to what is in all men, though unconfessed—a supernatural fear in the heart of something near us at which we dare not look. Here we have not fear caused by conscience, but a pure dread of the unknown, whose colours are woven by the imagination.

456-7. Compare ll. 309, etc.

458. Perhaps his fears arise as he remembers the supernatural manifestations that followed the wind referred to in ll. 309, etc.

464, etc. May the Mariner regain fully his former moral status?

470-71. Why these alternative petitions?

504. The Pilot and the Hermit bring external help to the returning Mariner; one representing in some sense practical wisdom and the other acting as the bearer of the truths of Christianity.

PART VII.

533-37. Mark the appropriateness and suggestiveness of the Hermit's comparison.

The "ivy-tod" is a thick clump of ivy.

549. The Mariner must bear in his own person the only traces left of his mighty struggle against the world of sense.

560. Analyze here as throughout the poems, Coleridge's method, vague and yet suggestive, of revealing to us the effects of the great spiritual struggle upon the Mariner's appearance. Compare in manner with Milton's description of Sin and Death in *Paradise Lost*, Bk. II.

Gloss. "Penance of life" = life penance.

601, etc. Whilst the Mariner's spirit has attained to a peaceful serenity, have his sympathies and joys remained unchanged? Compare ll. 21, etc.

612-17. Have we here the lesson of the poem? Do you agree with Coleridge himself that there is too frequent and too great obtrusion of the moral of the poem?

The poet in this passage is consistent with the age and its noble enthusiasm for all created things. Much of a like generous sensibility is found in Burns (*To a Field Mouse*), in Wordsworth (*Hart-Leap Well*) and in Cowper:

I would not enter on my lists of friends
(Though graced with polished manners and fine sense,
Yet wanting sensibility) the man
Who needlessly sets foot upon a worm.

623. forlorn = forsaken by sense.

YOUTH AND AGE.

Poets have found no commoner subject for lyrical thought than "youth" or "age"—youth with its buoyant enthusiasms, its loves, its joys; age with its serenity, its gravity, even, at times, its sterilities. Such lyrical thought has sprung often from the common-place experiences of the great masses of mankind in ballads, and has engaged the genius of our noblest spiritual thinkers. Byron passionately laments the loss of the warmth and glow of youthful emotions in his *Youth and Age*, Shelley, in his *Lament*, longs for the ideal joy that in his youth crowned the "prime of the world"; Tennyson, "thinking of the days that are no more," and grieving over the failure of a youthful aspiration, feels

Tears from the depths of some divine despair
Rise in the heart and gather to the eyes.

Time and again Longfellow carries us back through the

scenes of his boyhood ; time and again has he lamented the benumbing power of years :

O sweet illusions of the brain
O sudden chills of fire and frost ;
The world is bright while ye remain
And dark and dead when ye are lost !

Wordsworth, we have already found, now lamenting the impoverishment of life by the extravagances of youth ; now mourning not merely for what life in its contact with the inexorable facts of the world has wrested from spiritual consciousness, but above all for what it has added or left behind. His tone, however, even here, is manly, cheerful and universal. Coleridge in later years frequently refers to his youth and to the great spiritual losses he has sustained, but about his regrets there clings an element of narrow personal feeling. Subject to intense physical sufferings, rendered despondent by his own mental apathy, he broods over his losses in a morbidly egoistic and despairing way.

According to the statements of his daughter, Sara, the three stanzas of *Youth and Age* were written at various periods of the poet's life. The first stanza was prefixed to the second in 1824, and the last stanza was added in 1827, whilst stanza II was written many years before 1824. The whole poem, as completed, was published in 1832. Can you detect any traces of this irregular composition ?

It would be well to examine carefully into the metrical form of the poem, to consider the appropriateness of the figurative language and to trace the logical connection of the ideas, especially in stanza II.

9. Coleridge, during his later years, suffered intensely from rheumatism and gout, from oppression in breathing, and from the physical inertia resulting from stoutness and his opium-eating habits.

12. *Like*. Is this word connected in thought with "body," l. 16, or with "flash'd," l. 11? Examine the punctuation. Note the peculiar use of "skiffs." The first boat propelled by steam was set afloat upon the Hudson River in 1807. In 1812, the first steamboat appeared in Great Britain—upon the Clyde. Until 1815-20, it was deemed impossible to use these boats upon the open sea (l. 13).

37. A sentiment true to Coleridge's life and experience.

39-49. This last stanza has a strongly personal note. Written in 1827, it is the product of the old age of the poet—of a feeble, helpless, and in some ways, hopeless old age. He longed for the relief that death brought in 1834. For this same wailing tone, so frequently the burden of his later poems and letters, the student might read the *Visionary Hope*, *Ode to Dejection* and *Work without Hope*.

THOMAS CAMPBELL.

[Thomas Campbell, a cadet of the respectable family of Campbell of Kernan, in Argyllshire, was born in Glasgow, in 1777, where his father was in business. He was educated at the Glasgow Grammar School and University. Owing to the straitened circumstances of his father, whose business ventures had been unfortunate, he had to support himself partially during these years by private tuition. At the age of twenty he moved to Edinburgh, attending lectures at the University, soliciting employment from the booksellers and making the acquaintance of a set of young men then resident in the Scottish metropolis whose names have since become historical—Walter Scott, Henry Brougham, Francis Jeffrey, Dr. Thomas Brown and others. In 1799 he published his poem *The Pleasures of Hope*, the success of which was instantaneous. A short visit to the Continent in 1800 was followed by his marriage in 1803. He moved to England shortly thereafter, settling in Sydenham, whose refined and intellectual society he found congenial to his taste. In 1805, a Government pension of £200 a year made him practically independent. He successfully contested, in 1827, the Rectorship of Glasgow University with Sir Walter Scott, and was re-elected the two following years. He removed to London in 1840, but the last years of his life were spent at Boulogne, where he died in 1844. He was buried in Westminster Abbey.]

Chronological List of Campbell's Chief Works.

The Pleasures of Hope.....	1798
Hohenlinden	} 1800
Ye Mariners of England.....	
The Battle of the Baltic.....	} 1809
Gertrude of Wyoming.....	
O'Connor's Child.....	
Theodoric	} 1824
Minor Poems.....	
Pilgrim of Glencoe	1842

DEVELOPMENT.

Campbell's life shows little of that struggle to realize a gift of genius in spite of the solicitation of other tendencies, which Wordsworth's or even Coleridge's life so strikingly exhibits. His importance in literature is almost wholly owing to an original emotional delicacy, a native feeling for style, and he made scarcely any effort to acquire by cultivation the qualities in which his nature was deficient—the qualities of steadiness, punctuality, prudence, in a word, of sanity and practicality. His strength and his limitations were largely those of the Celtic temperament which was his by birth. We may doubt the over-ruling importance of race without denying its influence altogether. It is quite true that a man can by force of will successfully combat the power of an inherited tendency, say to drunkenness, and it is equally true that the inherited tendency will operate if force of character is lacking. Tacitus' account of the Germans, and Caesar's of the Gauls, are as true of the modern representatives of the Teutonic and of the Celtic races respectively as they were when they were written. The obvious inference is that certain racial characteristics tend to become hereditary in a people except where modified by the effort of particular individuals to acquire a broader culture than that of their own people. Now Celtic characteristics have possessed a peculiar attraction for writers of all

ages. Tacitus noticed them, Caesar described them, Matthew Arnold, in his *Celtic Literature*, has observed them with great precision and delicacy. "The Celtic is," he says, "an organization quick to feel impressions and feeling them very strongly; a lively personality, therefore, and keenly sensitive to joy and sorrow. If the downs of life, too, outnumber the ups, the temperament, because it so quickly and nearly conscious of all impressions, may no doubt seem shy and wounded; it may be seen in wistful regret, in passionate, penetrating melancholy, but its essence is to aspire ardently after life light emotion, to be expansive, adventurous, gay. The impressionable Celt, soon up and soon down, is the more down because it is his nature to be up, to be sociable, hospitable, eloquent, figuring away brilliantly. He loves bright colours. He easily becomes audacious, over-crowding, full of fanfaronade. The Celt is often called sensual, but it is not so much the vulgar satisfaction of sense that attracts him as emotion and excitement. Balance, measure, patience, the eternal conditions of success are less prominent in the Celt. In poetry the Celt has shown genius, indeed, splendid genius, but here, though emotion counts for much, reason too, reason, measure, sanity count for more—and the Celt has not produced great poetical works. He has only produced poetry with an air of greatness, investing it all and sometimes giving to shorter poems or to passages, lines, or snatches of longer poems, singular beauty and power. He gives you only so much interpretation of the world as the first dash of a quick, strong perception and then sentiments, infinite sentiment can give . . . The sensibility of the Celt is not to be blamed. It is a beautiful and admirable force if

everything else were not sacrificed to it. Sensibility gives genius its materials, makes one full of reverence and enthusiasm for learning, eloquence, conversation and the things of the mind. One cannot have too much sensibility if one can keep its master and not its slave—if one can keep a law of measure, of harmony presiding over the whole."

Of the Celtic temperament, Campbell had the quick, strong perception. Owing to the straitened circumstances of his father he was obliged, while attending college, to do private tutoring, yet in spite of the additional labour he made rapid progress in his studies and gained a distinguished place in the classes of the university. He had its exquisite sensibility. According to his friend and biographer, Dr. Beattie, "his imaginative faculty had been so unremittingly cultivated that circumstances, trifling in themselves, had acquired undue influence over his mind. He drew from everything around him with morbid ingenuity some melancholy presage of the future." He early showed its fondness for the things of the mind, for poetry and eloquence, and for style, but he was deficient in patience, perseverance and industry. In 1798, at the age of 21, he published *The Pleasures of Hope*, modelled upon Rogers' *The Pleasures of Memory*, which appeared five years previously. It has the fault, in common with its model, of a prevailing didactic tameness, but neither the nature of the subject nor the conventional form of the poem could altogether obscure the fact that didactic subject and conventional form had been used with remarkable freedom. In it a delicacy of thought and an occasional power of pathos were skilfully combined with a beauty of imagery, a harmony of versification

and a remarkable felicity of language. It contains many lines familiar to every ear :

'Tis distance lends enchantment to the view,
and,
What though my winged hours of bliss have been
Like angel-visits, few and far between.

Notwithstanding its popularity—the poem ran through four editions within a year of its publication,—Campbell was sufficiently aware of the direction of his own genius not to be led away by his success. He had to listen to the new men of the coming century for a few years longer before he caught the metre and diction that would give his Celtic nature free play. His travels on the Continent in 1800-1 brought him into contact with the romantic thought of Germany and introduced him to the critical canons of Schlegel, and these influences, directly and indirectly, appear as moulding, to some extent, the form and matter of such lyrics as were the product of these years abroad. In *Ye Mariners of England*, in *Hohenlinden*, we find traces of the new romantic school, a Wordsworthian sincerity and naturalness of manner, combined with what better and more recent critical principles gave him, a less superb diction, chaster imagery, greater warmth and freedom of metrical form. It is characteristic, too, of the new influence, for the arrival of which he had waited longer than other poets of the age, that in these shorter poems he falls back upon earlier ballad measures, through which he can give to his work greater spontaneity, together with greater unity and compactness of thought. The dull manner and desultory design of his earlier poem, *The Pleasures of Hope*, to a large extent vanish in the animated strains and singleness of poetic purpose of these war-songs.

For some time now, 1803-9, he stifled his poetic powers by common hack-work in pamphlets and journals, but hack-work as it was, this common struggle, plain, utilitarian and non-imaginative, together with inbred classical tastes did much, if not more, than all other influences—than either the romanticism of Wordsworth or the critical principles of Coleridge—to prune, moderate and shape his poetic style.

Endowed from his Celtic nature with unusually keen sensibilities and active intuitions, he never erred in apprehending and expressing the aspirations of the age. The heroic temper of England in her Napoleonic struggle is mirrored in his war lyrics; the new spirit of interest in his fellow-man cries out in him passionately for the protection of Poland and the liberation of the slave. And not only did he with his acute Celtic sensibilities intuitively understand the age and its aims, with splendid Celtic adaptability of temper and genius he could shape himself anew to the shifting demands of that age. Scott, with his long metrical romances, created a new literary taste—and in 1809, responding to this demand, Campbell turned from his war-songs as mere “drum and trumpet things” and wrote his *Gertrude of Wyoming*. The brilliant platitudes, the disconnected thought, the forced plan of the *Pleasures of Hope* all disappear. Here we have a simple tale pervaded by much sweetness, purity and simplicity of manner and thought and a deep pathos that mark the developing poet.

In his short and charming ballad, *Lord Ullin's Daughter*, published in the same year, his poetic powers have reached the flow of the high-tide. Here we find a terseness and concise-

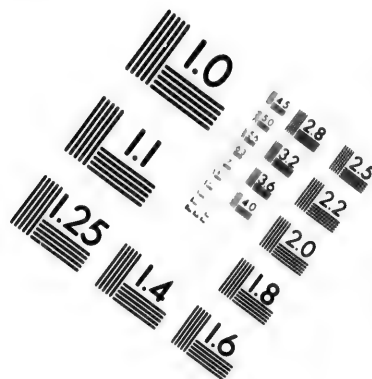
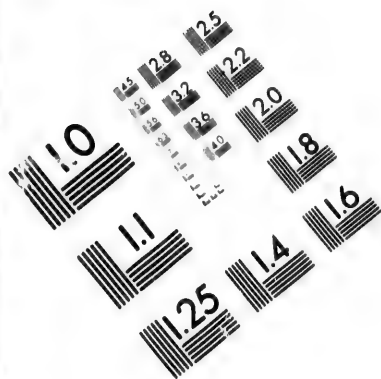
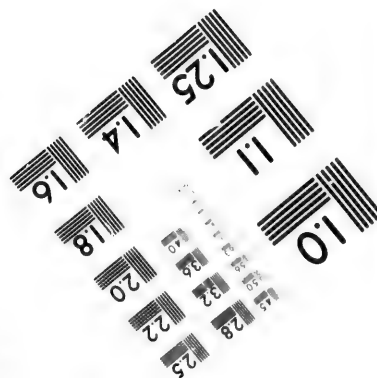
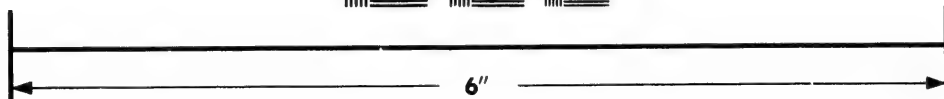
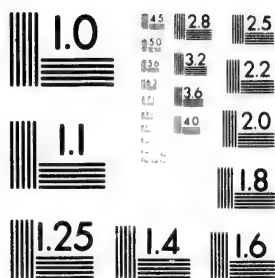


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ness of form—almost epigrammatic in character, a warmth and tenderness of feeling and a true vigour of descriptive epithet :

By this the storm grew loud apace,
The water-wraith was shrieking ;
And in the soowl of heaven each face
Grew dark as they were speaking.

How strong and sincere is the pathetic touch in :

"Come back ! Come back !" he cried in grief,
"Across this stormy water ;
And I'll forgive your Highland chief,
My daughter !—oh, my daughter !"

In *O'Connor's Child*, published also in 1809, we have the noblest product of the noblest features of the Celtic character. Here one cannot find reason or measure or sanity, but a deeply wistful regret, a romantic, adventurous and weird interest, a truly tragic pathos. All didactic purpose has vanished, and with much delicacy of touch can he sing :

Bright as the bow that spans the storm,
In Erin's yellow vesture clad,
A son of light—a lovely form,
He comes and makes her glad ;
Now on the grass-green turf he sits,
His tassell'd horn beside him laid ;
Now o'er the hills in chase he flits,
The hunter and the deer a shade.

with passionate Celtic eloquence :

When all was hushed, at eventide
I heard the baying of their beagle :
Be hush'd ! my Connocht Moran cried,
'Tis but the screaming of the eagle.
Alas ! 'twas not the eyrie's sound ;
Their bloody bands had track'd us out ;
Up-listening starts our couchant hound
And hark ! again, that nearer shout
Brings faster on the murderers.

Spare, spare him—Brazil—Desmond fierce.
In vain—no voice the adder charms.

Their iron hands had dug the clay,
And o'er his burial turf they trod,
And I beheld,—O God ! O God !
His life-blood oozing from the sod !

with some vividness and emotional suggestiveness of imagery :

No :—let the eagle change his plume,
The leaf its hue, the flower its bloom ;
But ties around this heart were spun,
That could not, would not, be undone !

After 1809, his poetic powers fade rapidly. "He seems," says Scott, "to be afraid of the shadow of his own fame." Years of sorrow come upon him, worldly cares and social interests benumb him, passion and animation and sensibility disappear, as they must disappear in all lives, and with them go the whole creative power of the Celt ; with wife dead, son mad, harp unstrung, he turns to write the prosaic, the affectedly simple *Theodoric*,—and he fails. Again he attempts production in the *Pilgrim of Glencoe*, and even more unworthy is the result !

To the last, however, he retains some classic purity of phrase and line, some sense of beauty and proportion, and exhibited some delicacy and grace of form. Strength has departed, but much sweetness is left. Nothing, for instance, can equal the perfection of form of :

The ordeal's fatal trumpet sounded,
And sad, pale Adelgitha came,
When forth a valiant champion bounded
And slew the slanderer of her fame.

She wept, delivered from her danger ;
But when he knelt to claim her glove—
"Seek not," she cried, "oh ! gallant stranger,
For helpless Adelgitha's love.

For he is in a foreign far land
Whose arm should now have set me free
And I must wear the willow garland
For him that's dead or false to me."

"Nay! say not that his faith is tainted!
He raised his visor—at the sight
She fell into his arms and fainted;
It was indeed her own true knight.

ESTIMATE OF HIS WORK.

In attempting an estimate of Campbell's poetic work and thought the student is at once met with what Arnold considers the primary defect in the poetic character of the Celt. In poetry he may have genius, splendid genius, but in poetry, "though emotion count for much, reason, too, reason, measure, sanity count for more—and the Celt has not produced great poetical works. . . . He gives you so much interpretation of the world as the first dash of a quick, strong perception and sentiments, infinite sentiments can give——." Of thought deep and profound, of definite and methodical philosophy, Campbell had none, and if he ever lost grip of his poetic powers it was when he turned aside to express the deeper unities of things. In the higher realms of imagination, he was strangely weak and tame ; insincere and unvital are to him conceptions that thrill the souls of his greater contemporaries. In his *View from St. Leonard's* he speaks of the sea :

The spirit of the universe in thee
Is visible ; thou hast in thee the life—
The eternal, graceful and majestic life—
Of nature, and the natural human heart
Is therefore bound to thee with holy love.

How tame and unsatisfactory compared with the sincerity of :

I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with a joy
Of elevated thoughts ; a sense sublime

Of something far more deeply interfused,
 Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
 And the round ocean and the living air,
 And the blue sky and in the mind of man ;
 A motion and a spirit that impels
 All thinking things, all objects of all thoughts,
 And rolls through all things.

In another sense also he was inferior to Wordsworth. The great poet of nature, having once grasped the concrete facts or relations of an object, an incident, or a tale, did not regard the mere reproduction or rearranging of these facts as his particular mission. To the every-day colour that surrounded the subject of his thought must be added the "light that never was on sea or land"; mind must enter into the very *arcana*, the very being of the incident, clothe it with its rational interpreting power and create it anew in the light of a great informing idea. But this Campbell to a large extent was unable to do. Poetic thought was with him the impulse of the moment, a strong overmastering emotion which rapidly flowed out upon the object and as quickly ebbed; with him it was not tranquil thought remembered in emotion, but a quick, "sharp dash of perception," giving stimulus to rich and overflowing sensibilities.

In many ways no English poet so closely resembles Campbell in personal character and literary genius as that other typical Celt, Goldsmith. Like Campbell, the Irish poet was in private life unsteady, imprudent, immoderate, passionate; fond of flattery, indolent and even insincere. With their Celtic instincts both men were benevolent, witty, eloquent, and—at times—foolishly boastful.

In literary capacity they were singularly alike. While both

poets were devoted to a chaste clearness and simplicity of thought, their very efforts to secure this ended in smooth, epigrammatic verse, where sense was sacrificed to sound and where exquisite melody hid tedious moralizings or irrational logic. We hear Goldsmith speaking through Campbell's couplet in :

She studied not the meanest to eclipse,
And yet the wisest listened to her lips,

and we catch the gist of the Irish poet's peculiar social views in :

To gorge a few with Trade's precarious prize,
We banish rural life, and breathe unwholesome skies.

As a result of their fastidiousness of taste, their classical exactness, their polish, their singular felicity of diction, and in some way, of their lack of constructive power, we possess from these men a number of household quotations in single lines and couplets altogether out of proportion with the relative importance of their authors. How completely have the following lines from Campbell become the common property of all English speakers :

To live in hearts we leave behind is not to die,

or

Coming events cast their shadows before,

or

Song is but the eloquence of truth,

or

To bear is to conquer our fate,

or

What millions died that Caesar might be great,

or

And muse on Nature with a poet's eye,

or

Like pensive beauty smiling in her tears,

or

'Tis distance lends enchantment to the view,

or

Like angel-visits, few and far between.

And yet they differ ! Campbell possessed the greater mental energy and the deeper spiritual power. Whether from the stronger impulses of the age or the inherent capacities of the man, certain it is that in his war-songs the Scotch poet shows a force, a fire, an energy together with a freedom of thought altogether beyond the limited range of Goldsmith.

mental
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She quells the floods below—
 As they roar on the shore,
 When the stormy winds do blow ;
 When the battle rages loud and long,
 And the stormy winds do blow. . 30

The meteor flag of England
 Shall yet terrific burn ;
 Till danger's troubled night depart
 And the star of peace return.
 Then, then, ye ocean-warriors ! 35
 Our song and feast shall flow
 To the fame of your name,
 When the storm has ceased to blow ;
 When the fiery fight is heard no more,
 And the storm has ceased to blow. 40

BATTLE OF THE BALTIC.

Of Nelson and the North
 Sing the glorious day's renown,
 When to battle fierce came forth
 All the might of Denmark's crown,
 And her arms along the deep proudly shone ; 5
 By each gun the lighted brand
 In a bold determined hand,
 And the Prince of all the land
 Led them on.

Like leviathans afloat 10
 Lay their bulwarks on the brine ;
 While the sign of battle flew
 On the lofty British line :

It was ten of April morn by the chime :
 As they drifted on their path 15
 There was silence deep as death ;
 And the boldest held his breath
 For a time.

But the might of England flush'd
 To anticipate the scene ; 20
 To her van the fleeter rush'd
 O'er the deadly space between.
 'Hearts of oak !' our captains cried, when each gun
 From its adamant lips
 Spread a death-shade round the ships, 25
 Like the hurricane eclipse
 Of the sun.

Again ! again ! again !
 And the havoc did not slack,
 Till a feeble cheer the Dane 30
 To our cheering sent us back ;—
 Their shots along the deep slowly boom :—
 Then ceased—and all is wail,
 As they strike the shatter'd sail ;
 Or in conflagration pale 35
 Light the gloom.

Out spoke the victor then
 As he hail'd them o'er the wave,
 'Ye are brothers ! ye are men !
 And we conquer but to save :— 40
 So peace instead of death let us bring :
 But yield, proud foe, thy fleet
 With the crews, at England's feet,
 And make submission meet
 To our King.' 45

Then Denmark bless'd our chief
That he gave her wounds repose ;
And the sounds of joy and grief
From her people wildly rose,
As death withdrew his shades from the day : 50
While the sun look'd smiling bright
O'er a wide and woeful sight,
Where the fires of funeral light
Died away.

Now joy, old England, raise ! 55
For the tidings of thy might,
By the festal cities' blaze,
Whilst the wine-cup shines in light ;
And yet amidst that joy and uproar,
Let us think of them that sleep 60
Full many a fathom deep
By the wild and stormy steep,
Elsinore !

Brave hearts ! to Britain's pride
Once so faithful and so true, 65
On the deck of fame that died,
With the gallant good Riou :
Soft sigh the winds of Heaven o'er their grave !
While the billow mournful rolls
And the mermaid's song condoles 70
Singing glory to the souls
Of the brave !

HOHENLINDEN.

On Linden, when the sun was low,
All bloodless lay the untrodden snow ;
And dark as winter was the flow
Of Iser, rolling rapidly.

But Linden saw another sight,
When the drum beat at dead of night
Commanding fires of death to light
The darkness of her scenery.

5

By torch and trumpet fast array'd
Each horseman drew his battle-blade,
And furious every charger neigh'd
To join the dreadful revelry.

10

Then shook the hills with thunder riven;
Then rush'd the steed, to battle driven;
And louder than the bolts of Heaven
Far flash'd the red artillery.

15

But redder yet that light shall glow
On Linden's hills of stained snow;
And bloodier yet the torrent flow
Of Iser, rolling rapidly.

20

'Tis morn; but scarce yon level sun
Can pierce the war-clouds, rolling dun,
Where furious Frank and fiery Hun
Shout in their sulphurous canopy.

The combat deepens. On, ye Brave
Who rush to glory, or the grave!
Wave, Munich! all thy banners wave,
And charge with all thy chivalry!

25

Few, few shall part, where many meet!
The snow shall be their winding-sheet,
And every turf beneath their feet
Shall be a soldier's sepulchre.

30

THE RIVER OF LIFE.

The more we live, more brief appear
Our life's succeeding stages :
A day to childhood seems a year,
And years like passing ages.

The gladsome current of our youth, 5
Ere passion yet disorders,
Steals lingering like a river smooth
Along its grassy borders.

But as the care-worn cheek grows wan,
And sorrow's shafts fly thicker, 10
Ye Stars, that measure life to man,
Why seem your courses quicker ?

When joys have lost their bloom and breath
And life itself is vapid,
Why, as we reach the Falls of Death, 15
Feel we its tide more rapid ?

It may be strange—yet who would change
Time's course to slower speeding,
When one by one our friends have gone
And left our bosoms bleeding ? 20

Heaven gives our years of fading strength
Indemnifying fleetness ;
And those of youth, a seeming length,
Proportion'd to their sweetness.

NOTES ON CAMPBELL.

THE WAR-SONGS.

The best of our folk-songs or ballads, springing as they do, naturally and spontaneously, from the heart of the whole people, represent, in their application to a particular epoch, not a trivial, ephemeral or local interest, but give utterance, explicitly and implicitly, to a great national thought and a great national movement. The *Robin Hood* ballads recall to us the mediæval struggle against unjust social and feudal conditions ; the *Border Minstrelsy* had for basal thought the invincible spirit of independence that hung about the vales and peaks of the Cheviots.

What is true of the ballad as the spontaneous product of a nation's tendencies and a nation's aspirations is also true of the greater works of the individual poet as well as of a special "school" of poets. The peculiar significance of Shakspeare's drama lay in its expression of the new and powerful Elizabethan interest in man ; the significance of the epics of Milton arises from their interpretation of the Puritan's conception of the relations between God and the human soul ; while Wordsworth reveals to us—as the main principle of his poetic creed - the restorative influences of the inter-action of nature and the spirit of man. In like manner and to a degree quite in keeping with his comparative inferiority as a poet, the greatness, the true inwardness of Campbell's war-songs can be understood only from a discovery in them of the spirit, the yearnings and the enthusiasms of the age out of which they have directly sprung.

Mighty impulses swayed men's minds. True, "the thing we specifically call French Revolution," had in appearance failed, had been "blown into space and had become a thing that was," but on its ruins in France arose the gigantic despotism of the first Napoleon. To this tyranny all Europe responded with the spirit of strenuous effort, of patriotic self-sacrifice and of undying resolve. Such a spirit reigning everywhere, found expression everywhere. The Arndts, the Körners of Germany, sang to a glorious conclusion the "War of Liberation"; Burns had spoken out amid the trumpet tones of his *Scots Wha Hae*, Scott thrilled all Britain with his heroic death of Marmion, and gave us in Branksome Hall, where warriors kept watch night and day in complete armour, a picturesque image of the England of the time. The heroic mood of the country, its national spirit and passion forced a response from Campbell.

But Campbell's songs represent more than the war-spirit of England. England's greatness, as well as her existence, depended then, as it had depended for centuries before, upon her naval supremacy, and upon their acceptance and glorification of this assured and certain fact, palpably and essentially significant, did his lyrics rely for their greatness and permanence.

The subject-matter of these war-ballads is the subject-matter of all such songs. The past with its heroic men and heroic deeds is invoked; the present is heralded with its opportunities and its capabilities; the future depicted with its oft-repeated rewards of "song, feast and fame." The manner is the natural manner of ballad poetry, brisk, animated, enthusiastic; the cadence is shifting and melodious, the movement rapid and the imagery vivid and suggestive. At times, carried away by the enthusiasm of the moment, the diction may grow vague and meaningless, the figurative conceptions far-fetched, the metrical form irregular, the logic of the thought involved and

complex, but these weaknesses only argue a corresponding increase in spiritual energy and enthusiasm and rarely mar what is the characteristic feature of the poems—a unity of purpose and effect.

YE MARINERS OF ENGLAND.

The exact date of production of this poem has been left in doubt. Biographers generally assign it, together with *Hohenlinden*, to the year 1800; the poet's autobiographical remains tell us that the patriotic ring of this lyric, when discovered among his papers in 1802, by the sheriff of Edinburgh, saved him from arrest for suspected treason. It formed, with *The Pleasures of Hope*, *The Battle of the Baltic*, *Lord Ullin's Daughter*, *O'Connor's Child*, an 1809 edition of Campbell's works.

6. The "other foe," referred to here, was Russia, with her allies Denmark and Sweden, in the Armed Neutrality of the North. See notes on the *Battle of the Baltic*.

9, 10. Note the repetition of this in other stanzas — an artifice borrowed from old ballad measures. To what extent has Campbell in these war-songs departed from the regular ballad form? See notes on the *Ancient Mariner* for the ballad measures, etc.

15. Blake, the great admiral of the Commonwealth time, died from natural causes while entering Plymouth Sound on his return from an expedition against Santa Cruz. This line when first printed—before the battle of Trafalgar—read :

Where Blake, the boast of freedom, fell.

31, 34. Compare with notes on the *Battle of the Baltic*, ll. 19, 20.

36, 37. See *Battle of the Baltic*, ll. 55-8.

BATTLE OF THE BALTIC.

The surrender of Malta to an English fleet in 1800 incensed the Czar Paul, who looked upon himself as the patron of the hereditary proprietors of that island—the Knights of St. John. Taking advantage of the

irritation in Denmark and Sweden over England's enforcement of the Right of Search over neutral vessels, he drew them with himself into a northern coalition against the latter power. An English fleet, under Sir Hyde Parker and Vice-Admiral Nelson, hoping to forestall a union of the Baltic fleets, entered the Sound in April 1801, appeared before Copenhagen, attacked and silenced the Danish batteries, captured the bulk of the Danish ships and forced Denmark to withdraw eventually from the coalition.

1. Compare with the opening verse of the *Æneid*: *arma virumque, cano*, etc.

5. The Danish defences consisted of battle-ships, mortar-boats, land batteries, and huge floating batteries. Compare ll. 10, 11 below.

8. The Prince Royal of Denmark was commander-in-chief.

15. The English fleet under Nelson weighed anchor in the offing at 9 o'clock and sailed before a gentle breeze into the harbour of Copenhagen through a narrow channel flanked by moored batteries.

19-20. "Perhaps absolute correctness or definiteness of diction is less to be insisted upon in what is ejaculated than what is concocted." Exemplify what you may call Campbell's faults of diction and faults of sound in these war-songs. What in part may account for these faults and what in part condone them?

21. *Fleeter*—implies a comparison. With what or whom?

22. *Deadly*—from the dangerous shoals and from the raking fires of the batteries.

26. Like the sun hidden by a southern storm.

Note the cumulative effect of ll. 23-27. Campbell with characteristic power often in these ballads depicted a whole scene with a few graphic touches.

27-36. An unusually stubborn engagement of four hours' duration.

37-45. Several Danish vessels had struck their flags and drifted helplessly into range of both their own and the English cannon. To save the crews, Nelson humanely sent a messenger to the Prince Royal with a flag of truce offering a temporary cessation of hostilities on condition of surrender of the helpless vessels, and expressing a hope for a reconciliation of the two nations. "The brave Danes," he wrote, "are the brothers and should never be the enemies of the English."

40. Save from absorption by her great allies, Russia and France.

50. As the battle-smoke cleared away.

63. **Elsinore.** A Danish seaport on a rocky coast within twenty-five miles of Copenhagen. It commands the Sound. Why used here instead of Copenhagen?

67. **Riou**, a gallant English captain, was slain in command of a squadron.

HOHENLINDEN.

This battle was fought Dec. 2, 1800, between the Austrians, under Archduke John, and the French, under Moreau, in a forest near Munich and not far from the Isar River. Campbell claimed—though perhaps untruthfully—to have been present on the scene either during or immediately after the battle.

11-16. Compare in manner with Drayton's *Battle of Agincourt*:

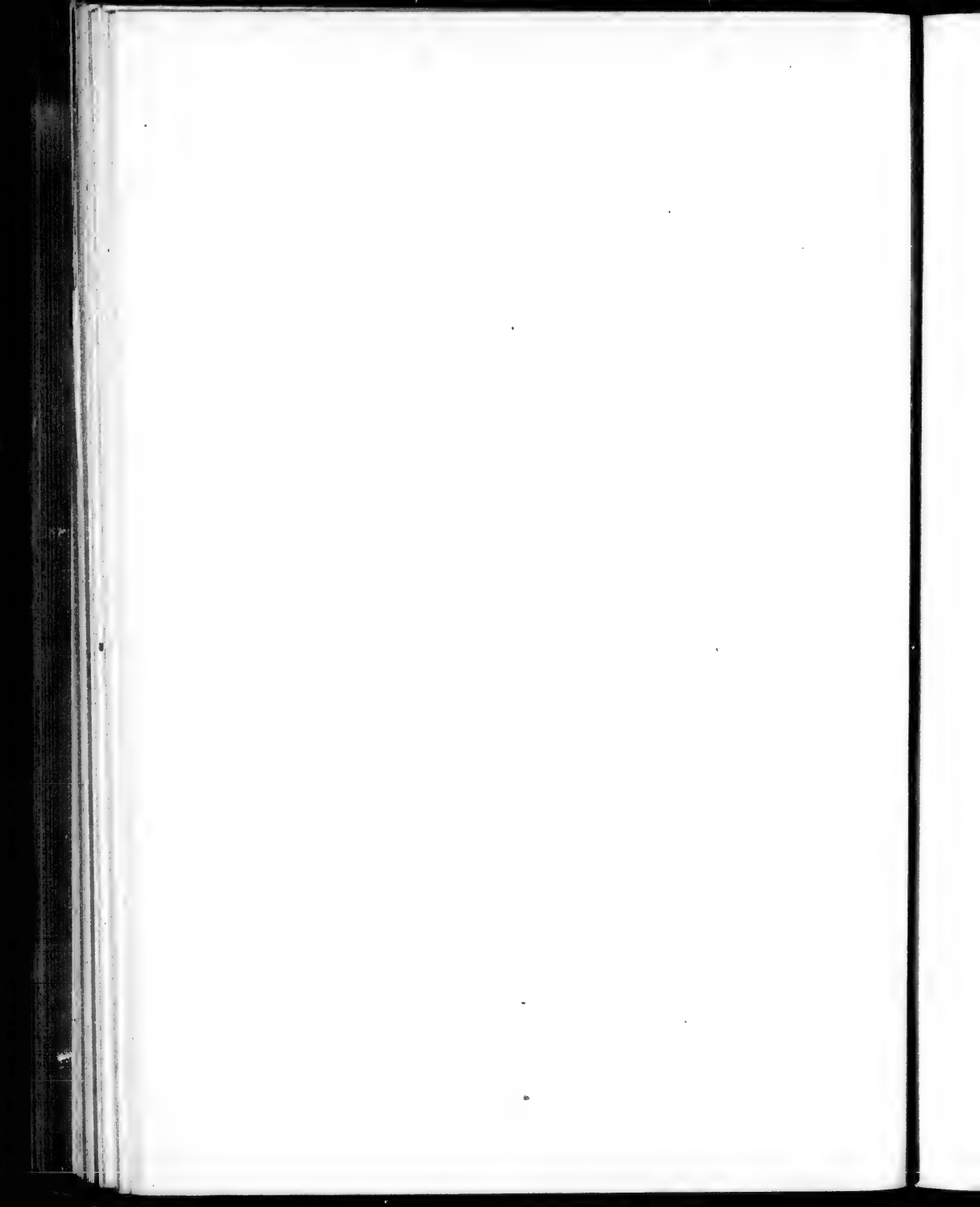
They now to fight are gone :
 Armour on armour shone,
 Drum now to drum did groan ;
 To hear was wonder ;
 That with the cries they make
 The very earth did shake ;
 Trumpet to trumpet spake ;
 Thunder to thunder.

THE RIVER OF LIFE.

The strong and animated movement, the majestic Byronic energy of Campbell's war-verse have here given place to a gentler cadence and an air of delicate and pathetic mildness so characteristic of the later works of the poet.

The thought of the poem has been in part expressed in almost the same figurative language by Longfellow :

The meadow-brook that seemeth to stand still
 Quickens its current as it nears the mill ;
 And so the stream of time that lingereth
 In level places and so dull appears,
 Runs with a swifter current as it nears
 The gloomy mills of Death.



HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW.

[Henry Wadsworth Longfellow was born February 27, 1807, in Portland, Me., of worthy New England stock. Trained in private schools and in Portland Academy, he entered Bowdoin College in 1821, was graduated with high honours in 1825, and, looking with indifference upon the profession chosen for him—law, he enthusiastically accepted in the same year an appointment as Professor of Modern Languages in his Alma Mater. Three years were allowed him wherein to better fit himself for the duties of his position, and these three years were spent abroad in France, Spain, Italy and Germany, travelling, studying and acquiring facility in the use of the great European languages. Returning to America in 1829 he entered upon his professional duties, giving all his energies to the routine of class work, to researches into the philology of the Romance tongues, and to the preparation of text books for his students. Thus restricted in his powers by his petty duties at Bowdoin, he gladly accepted in 1834 an appointment as successor to Professor Ticknor in the chair of Modern Languages at Harvard. Immediately he again went abroad to study the languages of Northern Europe, especially those of Germany and Holland. Whilst passing through the latter country he was detained at Rotterdam by the sudden illness and death of his wife—a Miss Mary Storer Potter, whom he had married in 1831. He assumed in 1837 the duties of his chair in Harvard, and remained in active work as professor until 1854, when he retired to devote all his time to literature. In 1861 he suffered a terrible loss in the distressing death by fire of his second wife—a loss that for some years benumbed his poetic faculties and threw over his remaining days an air of pensive and lonely exclusiveness. Third and fourth trips he made to Europe in 1842 and 1868, receiving in his last visit to England the most cordial welcome from the Universities and the literary world. In 1882, in his own home—Craigie House—at

Cambridge, near Boston, he quietly passed away—the peaceful end of a singularly peaceful life.]

Chronological List of Longfellow's Chief Works as Published.

Coplas de Manrique (translation).....	1833
Outre-Mer (travels)	1835
Hyperion (prose romance)	1839
Voices of the Night.....	1839
Ballads and other Poems	1841
Poems on Slavery	1842
Spanish Student (drama)	1843
Poets and Poetry of Europe	1845
Belfry of Bruges	1846
Evangeline.....	1847
Kavanagh (prose romance)	1849
Seaside and Fireside	1850
Golden Legend (dramatic poem) ..	1851
Hiawatha	1855
Miles Standish	1858
Tales of a Wayside Inn	1863
Flower-De-Luce	1867
Divine Comedy of Dante (translation)	1867-70
New England Tragedies	1868
Divine Tragedy.....	1871
Christus	1872
Aftermath	1873
Hanging of the Crane.....	1874
Masque of Pandora	1875
Kéramos.....	1878
Ultima Thule.....	1880
In the Harbour (Ultima Thule, Pt. II.)	1882
Michael Angelo (dramatic fragment).....	1884

LITERARY LIFE AND THOUGHT.

"THE literature of America," says Whipple, "is but an insufficient measure of the realized capacities of the American mind. When Sir William Hamilton declared that Aristotle had an imagination as great as that of Homer, he struck at the primary fact that the creative energies of the human mind may be exercised in widely different lines of direction. Imagination is, in the popular mind, obstinately connected with poetry and romance, and when the attempt is made to extend the application of the creative energy of imagination to business and politics, the sentimental outcry becomes almost deafening. . . . In fact, it is the direction given to the creative faculty that discriminates between Fulton and Bryant, Whitney and Longfellow. . . . It would be easy to show that in the conduct of the every-day transactions of life, more quickness of imagination, subtlety and breadth of understanding and energy of will have been displayed by our business men than by our authors.

By the necessities of our position, the aggregate mind of the country has been exercised in creating the nation as we now find it. . . . The nation out-values all its authors, even in respect to those powers which authors are supposed specially to represent. No one can write intelligently of the progress of American literature during the past hundred years

without looking at American literature as generally subsidiary to the grand movement of the American mind."

In considering the literary character of any particular epoch in American history, or in estimating the relative worth of any particular American thinker—though he be like Longfellow, in many respects the most interesting and in all respects the most popular of her authors—the student of literature will feel strongly the significance of the truth that underlies their quotation, and will recognize to some extent the limitations that mar the greatness of America's literary men. Wordsworth and Coleridge, if not to their immediate contemporaries, at least to our generation, stand forth upon the threshold of this century as the commanding figures of the age, the moulders and wielders of English opinion, the philosophers whose thoughts pervaded all phases of life, directed to some extent all the energies of man, the prophets whose inspired visions revealed the wonders of human life and the mysteries of the spiritual world. From such heroic figures as these we turn to Bryant, or Poe, or Whittier, or Longfellow, with a painful sense of loss. Here is no shaping spirit, no inspired prophet, no profound philosopher! But here are literary men, translators, elegant versifiers, and, to some extent, poets, relatively speaking, great American poets, reflecting imperfectly, rarely leading or shaping the aggregate of American thought. Here, too, are uttered philosophies, borrowed in origin, detached and incoherent in method, involving a body of thought "quite subsidiary to the grand movements of the American mind." The student of American literature, then, must approach his work with the conviction that however mighty are the great forces or ten-

dencies at work shaping the current of the national life, these forces spend their momentum in other and widely scattered fields of energy, not in literature ; that in so far as literary thought, or above all, poetry, is the result of these mighty influences, as such a result it must be regarded as comparatively insignificant and subsidiary. Or, to put it in another way—the causes being known as potent and far-reaching—the student must add no fictitious value to the effects. Of no American author must he be more careful in his estimate than of Longfellow, because of him it may be said that more inadequately than others does he represent the stronger and greater movements of the age.

Up to the beginning of the 19th century American life and tendencies were altogether practical, material and utilitarian. The range of thought and of spiritual experience had been narrowed in the earnest struggle for existence against the sterner forces of nature. Such creative powers and impulses as had not become sterilized were busily engaged in matters of industrial or mechanical progress. Externally, too, there pressed upon the American the burdens of great foreign complications : the mighty efforts for national existence put forth tentatively early in the 18th century were not to cease until the war of 1812 had removed all fears of foreign interference. Whilst in these external and objective relations American life had narrowed, hardened and grown more intense, there were also at work mighty forces, shaping and moulding the moral life of the nation. The early Puritan temper—that of the Stuart days—so noble in its sense of personal independence and personal responsibility, so calm and

self-controlled in its primitive and ideal forms, had grown harsh and limited in later years. Whilst honouring at first and developing as no other movement, the true greatness of the individual soul, this same Puritan temper and spirit expressed itself before the end of the 17th century largely in caricature and degeneration—"in architecture as square-meeting houses with hipped roofs and belfries; in sculpture as grave-stones with winged death's-heads in low relief; in poetry, as epitaphs and elegies; in decoration, whitewash; in music, the 'lining-out' of psalms;"—and yet in some features the early Puritan temper had not altogether disappeared. Through the grotesque excrescences of 17th century bigotry, it had successfully passed; through the materialism, the immorality, the fatalism of the Post-Revolutionary period—and now in the first quarter of the 19th century it was still a living factor in the American character. The American temper was still serious, still religious, and amid the restraining influences of a continued struggle with material things, still altogether sane.

But the 19th century ushered in a new age—what we may call an ethical age. Politically the country had asserted her supremacy on this continent, had rapidly extended her boundaries and with unparalleled success developed her resources. More than ever men's thoughts now turned to the investigation of internal and domestic problems. Before the mind of the nation came up for settlement the questions of freedom and union, of slavery and disunion. Standing, too, on the verge of a new era of democratic life, truer, fresher, and more robust than the old life, nobler and more humane in its

workings, the American temper became more cheerful ; wider sympathies arose ; man unburdened himself of the weaknesses of 18th century thought ; self-love gradually disappeared before love of the race ; appeals to emotions and sympathetic interests replaced appeals to reason. Such an era, so essentially ethical in its aim and character, must have wielded extensive and far-reaching influences upon the whole succeeding century. It wrought great changes in theology. Loftier became the dignity of the naked human soul ; more human became the conception of the life of Christ ; the world was an incarnation of God ; man was a new-born bard of the Holy Ghost, ever open to the influx of the all-knowing spirit ; the Bible was but one form of revelation ; through all was seen a realization of the grander and more spiritual realities. And it was not without its profound influence upon society and social questions. Americans became leaders in the work of philanthropic reform. Prisons and hospitals, intemperance and slavery come under the processes of practical legislation—woman's rights, missions, pantisocratic schemes, Brook Farms, New Harmony societies, are fresh fields of ethical work and thought. But greatest of all results was the new and profound view of the relations existing between man and nature. Channing by the seashore could say : " here in reverential sympathy with the mighty power around me, I become conscious of power within ;" here he found his noblest joy, " the happiness of communing with the works of God." Emerson felt that the greatest delight in nature was the suggestion of the occult relation between man and the vegetable. It is from this recognition in America of the new scheme of crea-

tion, that we have the landscape-views of Gifford, the nature-studies of Audubon, and the contemplative poems of Bryant.

No slight propelling force in thus turning men's thoughts to the relations between man and nature, and through and beyond nature-worship to transcendentalism must have been the study of foreign models. Wordsworthianism gently made its way across the Atlantic to burst forth in that enthusiastic nature-song, *Thanatopsis*. Coleridge did not remain without his influence. In an edition of his *Aids to Reflection*, his transcendental ideas first came to American minds. Germany added her influence through the translations and essays of Carlyle and through the widespread interest gathering around the last days of Goethe. These new forces, native and assimilated, together with the revival in universities of Greek studies, combined to produce Emerson, *par excellence*, the king of American transcendentalists.

As the early and purely ethical or sentimental stage of the thought movement of this century advanced towards transcendentalism, the individual American became more and more emancipated from custom, less and less timid and obsequious to public opinion; less sensitive to foreign criticism, and more apprehensive of a moral law and of the indwelling of the universal Spirit in the hearts of men, working the fusion of God, man and nature. "The universe becomes transparent," exclaimed Emerson, "and the light of higher laws than its own shines through it. The moral law lies at the centre of nature and radiates to the circumference. The spirit alters, moulds, makes nature."

Such an age, moved by such suggestive and far-reaching

influences, rich in thought and life, cheerful, buoyant, fresh, impulsive, yet growing more and more spiritual, demanded interpreters. Channing, Emerson, Whittier, Bryant and Longfellow appear. Where and in what rank shall we place Longfellow? We have already said that he, of all great American thinkers of the day, represented most imperfectly and most inadequately these greater national movements to which we have referred. Indeed to these mighty influences in their entirety he could not enthusiastically respond; his life and temper were negative in character rather than positive. Living in the same age, he had little of the moral intensity or passion of Whittier, of the spiritual fervour of Channing, of Bryant's minute and loving appreciation of nature, of Emerson's lofty intellectual courage and his transcendentalism. And yet Longfellow's thought is moral, is spiritual; he does love nature and has intellectual independence. Possessed of moderate intellectual power, of refined sensibilities, of scholarly tastes, he caught just so much of the aims and aspirations of the day as was within the reach of the great mass of the American people, and his poetic fame rests upon the skill of word, of verse, of imagery, of illustration, with which he has represented these aspirations to the consciousness of man. In order more clearly to understand this, let us hurriedly review his literary life and growth, attempting, as he passes through the various stages of his development, to point out the comparatively insignificant influences of the great forces of the age upon his work and character. It will be convenient to regard his development under two distinct heads: (a) The apprenticeship period, wherein he was but a

man of letters; (b) the poet period, wherein he attempted native and spontaneous work.

(a) APPRENTICESHIP—THE MAN OF LETTERS.

Born in Portland, Maine, in a north-eastern state, the poet's youth was passed amid the fading influences of Puritanism. Little was there in his surroundings, whether at home or at school, to arouse in him passionate and soul-stirring energies, to stimulate him to strong and strenuous effort. His father, blessed with no creative genius in himself, surrounded the youth with a refinement, an austerity, a moral exactness that recall another father and a much greater son—the Goethes. The mother—a typical product of what was characteristic in Puritanism—was intensely fervent and religious. In this strongly moral atmosphere, with its culture and yet with its sturdy common sense, the boy lost all traces of coarseness and gained his delicacy of taste, his sensitiveness, his steady, moral and moralizing temper, and his indifference to the warmth and glow of the passions of life. Nature, in so far as he lived in her presence at Portland, did little to develop his growing mind. Indeed all influences to him, other than those of his home, were of an earthly, materialistic character, narrow, non-stimulative and unvital. Even his memories of youthful joys are non-suggestive.

His early productions in verse—for as early as his Bowdoin College days he had written verses—possess some smoothness of versification but embody no poetic thought, boast no spark of poetic fire: they are imitative, derivative, and issue from a very slender poetic reed. Even here, however, is revealed his

relation to the great external world. Nature and human life are his subjects only so far as in them he sees reflected artistic forms and possibilities of treatment. Instinctively he turns from the elemental significance, the spiritual content of things, to colour, richness and decorative grace.

It is interesting to note in Longfellow the struggle for the attainment of a vehicle of expression. He had very early in life felt the yearnings of a literary spirit—not of a creative impulse—and calmly stated to his father his determination to seek expansion in literature: “I most eagerly aspire after future eminence in literature; my whole soul burns ardently for it and every earthly thought centres in it. . . Surely there never was a better opportunity offered for exertion of literary talent in our own country than is now offered. . . Whether nature has given me any capacity for knowledge or not, she has at any rate given me a very strong predilection for literary pursuits; and I am almost confident in believing that if I can rise in the world, it must be by my exercise of my talent in the wide field of literature.”

This letter, with its quiet tone of settled conviction, leads us to expect what later years turned into fact. From intimate knowledge of his own powers and limitations, he shaped his life with singular felicity in harmony with the capacities that were his by birth. Whether from the instinctive tastes and sensibilities of his own being or from the force of his own voluntary effort, certain it is that amid all the vicissitudes of a long life, Longfellow never failed to follow that path “which his intellectual and emotional endowment pointed out.”

At college he lived in his books, untouched by outside influences, but catching in his linguistic studies the interpreting power of literature. In foreign literary models, indeed, not in actual contact with men, he sought interesting revelations of life, and in the ordinary duties of his instructorship he went to those literary productions wherein was embodied human experience in its most sympathetic form. His travels in Europe, 1826-29, gave him so widened an acquaintance with historic and contemporaneous literature, so enlarged the stores of his knowledge, that he must more imperatively than ever seek a means of expression. And this necessity for utterance did not now point irresistibly towards poetry. "My poetic career is finished," he wrote his father when returning from the continent. "Since I left America I have hardly put two lines together." Such means of expression of concrete facts as were naturally his—the text-book for his classes, the lecture, the pamphlet, the essay—grew distasteful to him. In them it was impossible regularly to classify and arrange the wealth which his travels had poured upon him, and now, in addition, his delicacy of taste demanded more permanent and more artistic forms. As a natural result of this striving for utterance, he published the impressions and lessons of his trip abroad in *Outre-Mer : A Pilgrimage Beyond the Sea*. No deep insight into the heart of man has the author as yet, no love of the finer products of man's genius—painting and sculpture, no originality of thought, imperfect mastery of the material he had amassed, and but little constructive power. In 1839 he published the impressions of his second voyage woven into a prose romance, *Hyperion*.

Little skill in design does the romance show, but growing lyrical and imaginative power. Tendencies, indeed, are now leading him strongly back towards poetry, and his own discriminating taste is soon to be convinced that in prose, thoughtful, practical, argumentative prose, he can never find complete utterance.

In his *Hyperion* we note distinct traces of German influences—the pathetic, emotional, sentimental colouring, the growing tendency towards subjective thought, towards self-satisfied moralizings, the air of romance with which the characters are invested—and yet but few transcendental ideas have reached him. His nature is altogether too earthly, too non-spiritual to be moved as Emerson was by the ideal conceptions of the new philosophy. Spain he has already imitated in a translation of *Coplas de Manrique*; Italy was to be studied in her masterpiece, *The Divine Comedy*, and of English poets he did not refrain from imitating both thought and form. We seem to hear the music of More's *Melodies* in :

They died in their glory, surrounded by fame,
And victory's loud trump their death did proclaim ;
They are dead ; but they live in each patriot's breast,
And their names are engraven on honour's bright crest.

And Wordsworth's thought appears—sadly shorn—in :

If thou art worn and hard beset
With sorrows, that thou wouldst forget,
If thou wouldst read a lesson that will keep
Thy heart from fainting and thy soul from sleep,
Go to the woods and hills ! No tears
Dim the sweet look that nature wears.

Longfellow at first instinctively and later in life intentionally, accepts these foreign influences as necessary for the

growth of American literature. "Ere the new world," he says to Whitman, "can be worthily original and announce herself and her own heroes, she must be well saturated with the originality of others and respectfully consider the heroes that lived before Agamemnon." To the study of these foreign models he brought his scholarly instincts, a pure, chivalrous temper, and the modest, impressionable mind of a poet, commingled with a gentle charity, a joy in life and a zeal for the beautiful. But to this study he did not and he could not bring that intensity of purpose, that strength of soul, that profound spiritual sympathy or that warmth and geniality of nature that would renew, revivify, re-create in him the spirituality of the mediæval Italians, the transcendental philosophy of the Germans or the nature-poetry of England.

THE POET.

With the publication of *Hyperion* in 1839 we enter upon the true poetic period of Longfellow's life. He is now a finished scholar, with taste and powers expanded and matured by years of study and experiment—and he remained a scholar, though the urgency of the student's mood must vanish in the full flush of intellectual manhood. His personal experiences had been enlarged and deepened; maturity had brought its hours of reflection and turned the eyes of the youth away from the external world of fact. With a definite purpose he now resolutely faces the realms of poetry as the sphere of his allotted work, and with the exception of a disastrous effort in *Kavanagh*, a rural romance, abandons prose for life. Now, too, begins in him what we may call the period of original production. He

himself feels assured at last of the possession within himself of matured capacities for native poetic work. In the *Prelude* to the *Voices of the Night* we are told that his soul has now, mingled and combined with its experiences,

Dreams that the soul of youth engage
Ere fancy has been quelled ;
Old legends of the monkish page,
Traditions of the saint and sage,
Tales that have the rime of age,
And chronicles of eld.

And with this wealth of specific and legendary fact went the now vital memories of youth :

Even in the city's throng
I felt the freshness of the streams,
That crossed by shades and sunny gleams,
Water the green land of dreams,
The holy land of song.

With a calm conviction of deeper and richer reflective powers, he can sing :

Look, then, into thine heart, and write !
Yes, into life's deep stream !
All forms of sorrow and delight,
All solemn voices of the night,
That can soothe thee or affright,—
Be these henceforth thy theme.

Henceforth the man of letters is gone and the poet reigns.

He is still moulded, it is true, to some extent by foreign influences. German thought predominates in the *Voices of the Night* (1839). There is heard the tender, romantic and sentimental voice of Heine without his deeper pathos or his wilder scorn, but in its domestic, refined, humane spirit, the volume is Longfellow's—and in its ever-growing tendency to moralize. In fact, the temper of the poet is changing. The fanciful

romantic element of *Hyperion* is gradually melting into a second phase of thought in which the great American tendency of the day, its respect for the innate worth of man, and for the oneness of spiritual existence, battled strongly with the serious Puritanical temper of his own life and the scholarly instincts of his Cambridge environment. Though his thought for the next decade, 1840-50, was more spontaneous, more native, more original, the ethical tendencies were too strong for him, and at times he preached in verse, Psalm after Psalm was published, turning with polished lines and common-place thought upon the questions of every-day American life—its hopes, energies, struggles, and its faith.

It is difficult to say of Longfellow, as has been said of Cambridge, that in spite of his own personal longings and of the demands of the age, he followed, in directing his creative impulses, the trend of the development of his own thought. Longfellow's temper consorted well with the temper and genius of the average American. With an instinctive consciousness of the narrow compass of his poetic voice he shaped, in his lyrics—his more spontaneous, though most didactic work—his thought and expression in harmony with the common-place demands of the great mass of Americans. From these sermons in verse, he passed into more national forms, the ballads, and with a definite purpose. "I have broken ground," he writes in 1840, "in a new field with the '*Wreck of the Schooner Hesperus*' on the reef of Norman's Woe, in a great storm. I shall send it to a newspaper. I think I shall write more. The national ballad is a virgin soil here in New England, and there are great materials. Besides, I have a great notion of working

upon the people's feelings. I desire a new sensation and a new set of critics."

The absence of the transcendental spirit from his *Voices of the Night*, his successful struggle against the broadening Unitarian tendencies of the age were due to a large extent to the non-impressionable character of his mind and perhaps to his dry-as-dust scholarly instincts. In harmony with the same instincts he turned quickly away from the great political movements of the hour, the practical problems of education, temperance, freedom and union. His poems on the slave question are forced and uninspired, the righteous indignation fictitious, and the spirit not national, whilst during the great civil war his voice was almost silent.

But his poetic greatness is not to be estimated by his shorter and perhaps more spontaneous poems alone. Of a healthy temperament, his moral and mental powers blessed with more than usual activity, he could not be content with swallow-flights of song. Since 1841, a conception of a great poem had lain unwrought in the mind of the poet. In 1842, growing daily in mastery of the technique of his art and more conscious of the powers within him, he had written .

Half of my life has gone and I have let
The years slip from me and have not fulfilled
The aspirations of my youth, to build
Some tower of song with lofty parapet.
Not indolence, nor pleasure nor the fret
Of restless passions that would not be stilled,
But sorrow and a care that a'most killed,
Kept me from what I may accomplish yet.

The thought had come to him to undertake a long and elaborate poem with the name of Christ, the theme of which

would be the various aspects of Christendom in the apostolic, middle and modern ages. Planned in 1841, this work was in part completed in 1873. Like Goethe's *Faust*, the production of the masterpiece reflected the onward march of the author's intellect, recorded his most intimate thoughts, his hopes, his faith, and his solution of life's problems. Longfellow has baffled all doubts, is sincere in his trust, and catching something of the century's spiritual enthusiasm relies upon man's ultimate realization of the divine in man. Here we have the ripened and matured faith of the singer; the concrete ethical principles of his short poems, the spirituality born of Dante, the tender ecclesiasticism reflected from his mediæval studies are all combined in the final stage of his creed—"in man the divine is transparent"—and here he, in a non-enthusiastic, unvital way, approaches most closely a realization of the great religious movement of his time.

Of his other longer and more ambitious poems little need be said. They may possess a wide sweep, great technical skill, a nice sense of fitness, and may show a deep national spirit, but whether as *Evangeline*, *Hiawatha* or *Miles Standish*, they reveal to us nothing new in the inner life of the poet. A great grief came to Longfellow in 1861 in the sudden death of his wife. "He felt the need," says his biographer, "of some continuous and tranquil occupation for his thoughts, and after some months he summoned courage to take up again the task of translating *Dante*." With distinct pleasure he returns to his former means of contact with the minds of other poets, but his long training in original work has strengthened his powers, increased his skill, and enlarged his independence.

In this task of translating he found a gentle stimulus for his poetic life, and a quickening of his spirit. "I agree with you completely," he writes to Freiligrath, "in what you say about translations. It is like running a ploughshare through the soil of one's mind; a thousand germs of thought start up which otherwise might have lain and rotted in the ground." Translation seems to have been particularly the field of work for Longfellow's genius. And in connection with his work, the word has a new and enlarged significance. His was not an original mind; out of the rough materials of life and nature he could not hew definite and organized thought; but of thought as mirrored in history, in the arts, in poetry—as in these it had been caught and organized by other and more original minds,—he could make a rearrangement, in his own most exquisite language, of what he found or admired. In other words, he could not create, rarely did he reconstruct; in rearranging and expressing the work of others he achieved success.

The poet never seems to have been without some greater, more ambitious poem wherein to mirror his inner life. Constantly—to within a year of his death—he did dash off light snatches of song expressive of passing incidents or interests, but in secret some greater work called for his deeper sympathies, his calm reflections, the wealth of his inner life. In this greater work we see that a mild, serene temper has now become his; the beautiful platitudes of his middle age are gone; with greater classical regularity come finer critical discrimination and a less fanciful glow. The *Divine Tragedy* he completed in 1870, and immediately began a dramatic

poem, *Michael Angelo*. This work, the secret product of the last decade of his life, expresses his daily thought and records his final views upon human life.

In the form of *Michael Angelo* we have no doubt the poet himself. With wisdom and calm reflection he broods over the problems of life—and feels its failures. He is under a spell which affects one like :

Malaria of the mind,
Out of the tomb of the majestic past ;
That fever to accomplish some great work,
That will not let us sleep. He must go on
Until he dies.

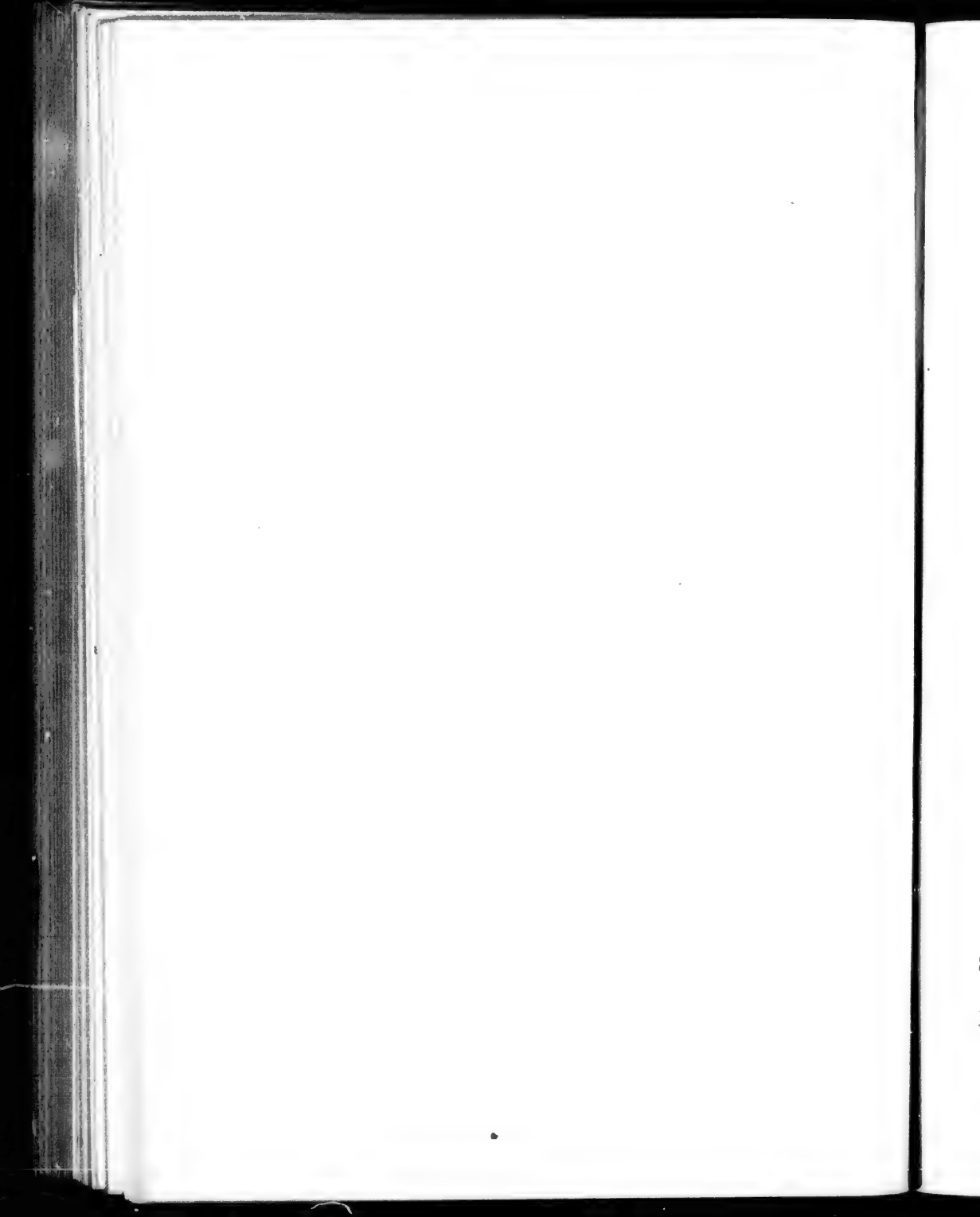
and he continues :

I saw the antique statues,
The forms august of gods and God-like men,
And the great world of art revealed itself
To my young eyes. Then all that man hath done
Seemed possible to me. Alas ! how little
Of all I dreamed of has my hand achieved !

And this sense, this conviction of toils unproductive, of work unfinished, might it not be the poet's consciousness of a yearning to leave behind a something created anew out of the materials of his own age and country, seeing which men would not lightly let his name die, or might it not be a confession of a failure on his part by the sheer force of mighty introspective power to see into the very life and soul of things, and leave them revealed to his fellowman ?

Catching, then, and representing only so much of the age's more stimulating ideas as came within the conscious recognition of the average American mind, Longfellow's influence upon the subsequent progress of thought in his country, upon

its onward and upward course must have been slight. But greater far than the influence of his philosophy of life or his gift of inspiration was the sweet, pure, refining influence of his life itself, and the simplicity of his life was his, not alone by birth, by education, by environment, but became peculiarly his through conscious effort. "In life, he chose and refrained according to the law of his will, and took clear views of his nature and its tendencies." "There was," says Scudder, "a notable sanity about all his modes of life, and his attitude towards books, and nature, and man."



EVANGELINE.

A TALE OF ACADIE.

THIS is the forest primeval. The murmuring pines and the
hemlocks,
Bearded with moss, and in garments green, indistinct in the
twilight,
Stand like Druids of eld, with voices sad and prophetic,
Stand like harpers hoar, with beards that rest on their bosoms.
Loud from its rocky caverns, the deep-voiced neighbouring
ocean
Speaks, and in accents disconsolate answers the wail of the
forest.

This is the forest primeval ; but where are the hearts that
beneath it
Leaped like the roe, when he hears in the woodland the voice
of the huntsman ?
Where is the thatch-roofed village, the home of Acadian
farmers,—
Men whose lives glided on like rivers that water the wood-
lands,
Darkened by shadows of earth, but reflecting an image of
heaven ?
Waste are those pleasant farms, and the farmers forever
departed !
Scattered like dust and leaves, when the mighty blasts of
October
Seize them, and whirl them aloft, and sprinkle them far o'er
the ocean.
Naught but tradition remains of the beautiful village of
Grand-Pré.

Ye who believe in affection that hopes, and endures, and is
 patient,
 Ye who believe in the beauty and strength of woman's
 devotion,
 List to the mournful tradition still sung by the pines of the
 forest ;
 List to a Tale of Love in Acadie, home of the happy.

PART THE FIRST.

I.

In the Acadian land, on the shores of the Basin of Minas, 20
 Distant, secluded, still, the little village of Grand-Pré
 Lay in the fruitful valley. Vast meadows stretched to the
 eastward,
 Giving the village its name, and pasture to flocks without
 number.
 Dikes, that the hands of the farmer had raised with labour
 incessant,
 Shut out the turbulent tides ; but at stated seasons the flood-
 gates 25
 Opened, and welcomed the sea to wander at will o'er the
 meadows.
 West and south there were fields of flax, and orchards and
 cornfields
 Spreading afar and unfenced o'er the plain ; and away to the
 northward
 Blomidon rose, and the forests old, and aloft on the mountains
 Sea-fogs pitched their tents, and mists from the mighty
 Atlantic 30
 Looked on the happy valley, but ne'er from their station
 descended.

There, in the midst of its farms, reposed the Acadian village.
Strongly built were the houses, with frames of oak and of
hemlock,
Such as the peasants of Normandy built in the reign of the
Henries.
Thatched were the roofs, with dormer-windows ; and gables
projecting 35
Over the basement below protected and shaded the doorway.
There in the tranquil evenings of summer, when brightly the
sunset
Lighted the village street, and gilded the vanes on the
chimneys,
Matrons and maidens sat in snow-white caps and in kirtles
Scarlet and blue and green, with distaffs spinning the
golden 40
Flax for the gossiping looms, whose noisy shuttles within
doors
Mingled their sound with the whirl of the wheels and the
songs of the maidens.
Solemnly down the street came the parish priest, and the
children
Paused in their play to kiss the hand he extended to bless
them.
Reverend walked he among them ; and up rose matrons and
maidens, 45
Hailing his slow approach with words of affectionate welcome.
Then came the labourers home from the field, and serenely the
sun sank
Down to his rest, and twilight prevailed. Anon from the
belfry
Softly the Angelus sounded, and over the roofs of the village
Columns of pale blue smoke, like clouds of incense ascending, 50
Rose from a hundred hearths, the homes of peace and
contentment

Thus dwelt together in love these simple Acadian farmers,—
Dwelt in the love of God and of man. Alike were they free
from

Fear, that reigns with the tyrant, and envy, the vice of
republics.

Neither locks had they to their doors, nor bars to their
windows ; 55

But their dwellings were open as day and the hearts of the
owners ;

There the richest was poor, and the poorest lived in abundance.

Somewhat apart from the village, and nearer the Basin of
Minas,

Benedict Bellefontaine, the wealthiest farmer of Grand-Pré,
Dwelt on his goodly acres ; and with him, directing his house-
hold, 60

Gentle Evangeline lived, his child, and the pride of the village
Stalworth and stately in form was the man of seventy winters ;
Hearty and hale was he, an oak that is covered with snow
flakes ;

White as the snow were his locks, and his cheeks as brown as
the oak-leaves.

Fair was she to behold, that maiden of seventeen summers ; 65
Black were her eyes as the berry that grows on the thorn by
the wayside,

Black, yet how softly they gleamed beneath the brown shade
of her tresses !

Sweet was her breath as the breath of kine that feed in the
meadows.

When in the harvest heat she bore to the reapers at noontide
Flagons of home-brewed ale, ah ! fair in sooth was the
maiden. 70

Fairer was she when, on Sunday morn, while the bell from its
turret

Sprinkled with holy sounds the air, as the priest with his
hyssop

Sprinkles the congregation, and scatters blessings upon them,
Down the long street she passed, with her chaplet of beads
and her missal,

Wearing her Norman cap and her kirtle of blue, and the ear-
rings, 75

Brought in the olden time from France, and since, as an heir-
loom.

Handed down from mother to child, through long generations.
But a celestial brightness—a more ethereal beauty—

Shone on her face and encircled her form, when, after con-
fession,

Homeward serenely she walked with God's benediction upon
her. 80

When she had passed, it seemed like the ceasing of exquisite
music.

Firmly builded with rafters of oak, the house of the farmer
Stood on the side of a hill commanding the sea ; and a shady
Sycamore grew by the door, with a woodbine wreathing around
it.

Rudely carved was the porch, with seats beneath, and a foot-
path 85

Led through an orchard wide, and disappeared in the meadow.
Under the sycamore-tree were hives overhung by a penthouse,
Such as the traveller sees in regions remote by the roadside,
Built o'er a box for the poor, or the blessed image of Mary.

Farther down, on the slope of a hill, was the well with its
moss-grown 90

Bucket, fastened with iron, and near it a trough for the
horses.

Shielding the house from storms, on the north, were the barns
and the farm-yard ;

There stood the broad-wheeled wains and the antique ploughs
and the harrows ;

There were the folds for the sheep ; and there, in his feathered
seraglio,

Strutted the lordly turkey, and crowed the cock, with the self-
same 95

Voice that in ages of old had startled the penitent Peter.
Bursting with hay were the barns, themselves a village. In
each one

Far o'er the gable projected a roof of thatch ; and a staircase,
Under the sheltering eaves, led up to the odorous corn-loft.

There too the dove-cot stood, with its meek and innocent
inmates 100

Murmuring ever of love ; while above in the variant breezes
Numberless noisy weathercocks rattled and sang of mutation.

Thus, at peace with God and the world, the farmer of
Grand-Pré

Lived on his sunny farm, and Evangeline governed his house-
hold.

Many a youth, as he knelt in the church and opened his
missal, 105

Fixed his eyes upon her as the saint of his deepest devotion ;
Happy was he who might touch her hand or the hem of her
garment !

Many a suitor came to her door by the darkness befriended,
And, as he knocked and waited to hear the sound of her foot-
steps,

Knew not which beat the louder, his heart or the knocker of
iron ; 110

Or, at the joyous feast of the Patron Saint of the village,
Bolder grew, and pressed her hand in the dance as he whispered
Hurried words of love, that seemed a part of the music.

But, among all who came, young Gabriel only was welcome ;

Gabriel Lajeunesse, the son of Basil the blacksmith, 115
 Who was a mighty man in the village, and honoured of all men;
 For since the birth of time, throughout all ages and nations,
 Has the craft of the smith been held in repute by the people.
 Basil was Benedict's friend. Their children from earliest
 childhood

Grew up together as brother and sister; and Father
 Felician, 120

Priest and pedagogue both in the village, had taught them
 their letters

Out of the selfsame book, with the hymns of the church and
 the plain-song.

But when the hymn was sung, and the daily lesson completed,
 Swiftly they hurried away to the forge of Basil the blacksmith.
 There at the door they stood, with wondering eyes to behold
 him 125

Take in his leathern lap the hoof of the horse as a plaything,
 Nailing the shoe in its place; while near him the tire of the
 cart-wheel

Lay like a fiery snake, coiled round in a circle of cinders.
 Oft on autumnal eves, when without in the gathering
 darkness

Bursting with light seemed the smithy, through every cranny
 and crevice, 130

Warm by the forge within they watched the labouring bellows,
 And as its panting ceased, and the sparks expired in the ashes,
 Merrily laughed, and said they were nuns going into the chapel.
 Oft on sledges in winter, as swift as the swoop of the eagle,
 Down the hillside bounding, they glided away o'er the
 meadow. 135

Oft in the barns they climbed to the populous nests on the
 rafters,

Seeking with eager eyes that wondrous stone, which the
 swallow

Brings from the shore of the sea to restore the sight of its
fledglings ;

Lucky was he who found that stone in the nest of the swallow !
Thus passed a few swift years, and they no longer were
children. 140

He was a valiant youth, and his face, like the face of the
morning,

Gladdened the earth with its light, and ripened thought into
action.

She was a woman now, with the heart and hopes of a woman.
"Sunshine of Saint Eulalie" was she called ; for that was the
sunshine

Which, as the farmers believed, would load their orchards with
apples ; 145

She too would bring to her husband's house delight and
abundance,

Filling it full of love and the ruddy faces of children.

II.

Now had the season returned, when the nights grow colder
and longer,

And the retreating sun the sign of the Scorpion enters.

Birds of passage sailed through the leaden air, from the ice-
bound, 150

Desolate northern bays to the shores of tropical islands.

Harvests were gathered in ; and wild with the winds of
September

Wrestled the trees of the forest, as Jacob of old with the angel.
All the signs foretold a winter long and inclement.

Bees, with prophetic instinct of want, had hoarded their
honey 155

Till the hives overflowed ; and the Indian hunters asserted
Cold would the winter be, for thick was the fur of the foxes.

Such was the advent of autumn. Then followed that beautiful
season,

Called by the pious Acadian peasants the Summer of All-
Saints!

Filled was the air with a dreamy and magical light; and the
landscape 160

Lay as if new-created in all the freshness of childhood.

Peace seemed to reign upon earth, and the restless heart of the
ocean

Was for a moment consoled. All sounds were in harmony
blended.

Voices of children at play, the crowing of cocks in the farm-
yards,

Whir of wings in the drowsy air, and the cooing of
pigeons, 165

All were subdued and low as the murmurs of love, and the
great sun

Looked with the eye of love through the golden vapours
around him;

While arrayed in its robes of russet and scarlet and yellow,
Bright with the sheen of the dew, each glittering tree of the
forest

Flashed like the plane-tree the Persian adorned with mantles
and jewels. 170

Now recommenced the reign of rest and affection and still-
ness.

Day with its burden and heat had departed, and twilight
descending

Brought back the evening star to the sky, and the herds to the
homestead.

Pawing the ground they came, and resting their necks on each
other,

And with their nostrils distended inhaling the freshness of
evening. 157

Foremost, bearing the bell, Evangeline's beautiful heifer,
Proud of her snow-white hide, and the ribbon that waved from
her collar,

Quietly paced and slow, as if conscious of human affection.
Then came the shepherd back with his bleating flocks from the
seaside,

Where was their favourite pasture. Behind them followed the
watch-dog, 180

Patient, full of importance, and grand in the pride of his
instinct,

Walking from side to side with a lordly air, and superbly
Waving his bushy tail, and urging forward the stragglers ;
Regent of flocks was he when the shepherd slept ; their
protector,

When from the forest at night, through the starry silence, the
wolves howled. 185

Late, with the rising moon, returned the wains from the
marshes,

Laden with briny hay, that filled the air with its odor.
Cheerily neighed the steeds, with dew on their manes and their
fetlocks.

While aloft on their shoulders the wooden and ponderous
saddles,

Painted with brilliant dyes, and adorned with tassels of
crimson, 190

Nodded in bright array, like hollyhocks heavy with blossoms.
Patiently stood the cows meanwhile, and yielded their udders
Unto the milkmaid's hand ; whilst loud and in regular cadence
Into the sounding pails the foaming streamlets descended.

Lowing of cattle and peals of laughter were heard in the farm-
yard, 195

Echoed back by the barns. Anon they sank into stillness ;

Heavily closed, with a jarring sound, the valves of the barn-
doors,
Rattled the wooden bars, and all for a season was silent.

In-doors, warm by the wide-mouthed fireplace, idly the
farmer
Sat in his elbow-chair, and watched how the flames and the
smoke-wreaths 200
Struggled together like foes in a burning city. Behind him,
Nodding and mocking along the wall with gestures fantastic,
Darted his own huge shadow, and vanished away into dark-
ness.
Faces, clumsily carved in oak, on the back of his arm-chair
Laughed in the flickering light, and the pewter plates on the
dresser 205
Caught and reflected the flame, as shields of armies the sun-
shine.
Fragments of song the old man sang, and carols of Christmas,
Such as at home, in the olden time, his fathers before him
Sang in their Norman orchards and bright Burgundian vine-
yards.
Close at her father's side was the gentle Evangeline seated, 210
Spinning flax for the loom that stood in the corner behind her.
Silent awhile were its treadles, at rest was its diligent shuttle,
While the monotonous drone of the wheel, like the drone of a
bagpipe,
Followed the old man's song, and united the fragments
together.
As in a church, when the chant of the choir at intervals
ceases, 215
Footfalls are heard in the aisles, or words of the priest at the
altar,
So, in each pause of the song, with measured motion the
clock clicked.

Thus as they sat, there were footsteps heard, and, suddenly
lifted,
Sounded the wooden latch, and the door swung back on its
hinges.

Benedict knew by the hob-nailed shoes it was Basil black-
smith, 220

And by her beating heart Evangeline knew who was with him.
“Welcome!” the farmer exclaimed, as their footsteps paused
on the threshold,

“Welcome, Basil, my friend! Come, take thy place on the
settle

Close by the chimney-side, which is always empty without thee;
Take from the shelf overhead thy pipe and the box of
tobacco; 225

Never so much thyself art thou as when, through the curling
Smoke of the pipe or the forge, thy friendly and jovial face
gleams

Round and red as the harvest moon through the mists of the
marshes.”

Then, with a smile of content, thus answered Basil the black-
smith,

Taking with easy air the accustomed seat by the fire-side:— 230

“Benedict Bellefontaine, thou hast ever thy jest and thy ballad!
Ever in the cheerfullest mood art thou, when others are filled
with

Gloomy forebodings of ill, and see only ruin before them.

Happy art thou, as if every day thou hadst picked up a horse-
shoe.”

Pausing a moment, to take the pipe that Evangeline brought
him, 235

And with a coal from the embers had lighted, he slowly
continued:—

“Four days now are passed since the English ships at their
anchors

Ride in the Gaspereau's mouth, with their cannon pointed
against us.

What their design may be is unknown; but all are commanded
On the morrow to meet in the church, where his Majesty's
mandate 240

Will be proclaimed as law in the land. Alas! in the mean-
time

Many surmises of evil alarm the hearts of the people."

Then made answer the farmer:—"Perhaps some friendlier
purpose

Brings these ships to our shores. Perhaps the harvests in
England

By untimely rains or untimelier heat have been blighted, 245
And from our bursting barns they would feed their cattle and
children."

"Not so thinketh the folk in the village," said, warmly, the
blacksmith,

Shaking his head as in doubt; then, heaving a sigh, he
continued:—

"Louisburg is not forgotten, nor Beau Séjour, nor Port Royal
Many already have fled to the forest, and lurk on its out-
skirts, 250

Waiting with anxious hearts the dubious fate of to-morrow.

Arms have been taken from us, and warlike weapons of all
kinds;

Nothing is left but the blacksmith's sledge and the scythe of
the mower."

Then with a pleasant smile made answer the jovial farmer:—

"Safer are we unarmed, in the midst of our flocks and our
cornfields, 255

Safer within these peaceful dikes besieged by the ocean,

Than our fathers in forts, besieged by the enemy's cannon.

Fear no evil, my friend, and to-night may no shadow of sorrow

Fall on this house and hearth ; for this is the night of the contract.

Built are the house and the barn. The merry lads of the village 260

Strongly have built them and well ; and, breaking the glebe round about them,

Filled the barn with hay, and the house with food for a twelve-month.

René Leblanc will be here anon, with his papers and inkhorn. Shall we not then be glad, and rejoice in the joy of our children?"

As apart by the window she stood, with her hand in her lover's, 265

Blushing Evangeline heard the words that her father had spoken,

And, as they died on his lips, the worthy notary entered.

III.

Bent like a labouring oar, that toils in the surf of the ocean,
Bent, but not broken, by age was the form of the notary public ;

Shocks of yellow hair, like the silken floss of the maize, hung 270

Over his shoulders ; his forehead was high ; and glasses with horn bows

Sat astride on his nose, with a look of wisdom supernal.

Father of twenty children was he, and more than a hundred Children's children rode on his knee, and heard his great watch tick.

Four long years in the times of war had he languished a captive, 275

Suffering much in an old French fort as the friend of the English.

Now, though warier grown, without all guile or suspicion,
Ripe in wisdom was he, but patient, and simple, and childlike.
He was beloved by all, and most of all by the children ;

For he told them tales of the Loup-garou in the forest, 280
And of the goblin that came in the night to water the horses,
And of the white Létiche, the ghost of a child who unchristened
Died, and was doomed to haunt unseen the chambers of
children ;

And how on Christmas eve the oxen talked in the stable,
And how the fever was cured by a spider shut up in a nut-
shell, 285

And of the marvellous powers of four-leaved clover and
horseshoes,

With whatsoever else was writ in the lore of the village.

Then up rose from his seat by the fireside Basil the blacksmith,
Knocked from his pipe the ashes, and slowly extending his
right hand,

"Father Leblanc," he exclaimed, "thou hast heard the talk
in the village, 290

And, perchance, canst tell us some news of these ships and
their errand."

Then with modest demeanor made answer the notary public,—

"Gossip enough have I heard, in sooth, yet am never the wiser;
And what their errand may be I know no better than others.

Yet am I not of those who imagine some evil intention 295
Brings them here, for we are at peace ; and why then molest
us ?"

"God's name !" shouted the hasty and somewhat irascible
blacksmith ;

"Must we in all things look for the how, and the why, and the
wherefore ?

Daily injustice is done, and might is the right of the strongest !"

But, without heeding his warmth, continued the notary
public,— 300

"Man is unjust, but God is just ; and finally justice
Triumphs ; and well I remember a story, that often consoled me,
When as a captive I lay in the old French fort at Port Royal."
This was the old man's favourite tale, and he loved to repeat it
When his neighbours complained that any injustice was done
them. 305

"Once in an ancient city, whose name I no longer remember,
Raised aloft on a column, a brazen statue of Justice
Stood in the public square, upholding the scales in her left hand,
And in its right a sword, as an emblem that justice presided
Over the laws of the land, and the hearts and homes of the
people. 310

Even the birds had built their nests in the scales of the
balance,

Having no fear of the sword that flashed in the sunshine above
them.

But in the course of time the laws of the land were corrupted
Might took the place of right, and the weak were oppressed,
and the mighty

Ruled with an iron rod. Then it chanced in a nobleman's
palace 315

That a necklace of pearls was lost, and ere long a suspicion
Fell on an orphan girl who lived as maid in the household.
She, after form of trial condemned to die on the scaffold,
Patiently met her doom at the foot of the statue of Justice.
As to her Father in heaven her innocent spirit ascended, 320
Lo ! o'er the city a tempest rose ; and the bolts of the thunder
Smote the statue of bronze, and hurled in wrath from its left
hand

Down on the pavement below the clattering scales of the
balance,

And in the hollow thereof was found the nest of a magpie,
Into whose clay-built walls the necklace of pearls was
inwoven." 325

Silenced, but not convinced, when the story **was** ended, the
 blacksmith
 Stood like a man who fain would speak, but findeth no
 language ;
 All his thoughts were congealed into lines on his face, as the
 vapours
 Freeze in fantastic shapes on the window-panes in the winter.

Then Evangeline lighted the brazen lamp on the table, 330
 Filled, till it overflowed, the pewter tankard with home-brewed
 Nut-brown ale, that was famed for its strength in the village
 of Grand-Pré ;

While from his pocket the notary drew his papers and inkhorn,
 Wrote with a steady hand the date and the age of the parties,
 Naming the dower of the bride in flocks of sheep and in
 cattle. 335

Orderly all things proceeded, and duly and well were completed,
 And the great seal of the law was set like a sun on the margin.
 Then from his leathern pouch the farmer threw on the table
 Three times the old man's fee in solid pieces of silver ;
 And the notary rising, and blessing the bride and the bride-
 groom, 340

Lifted aloft the tankard of ale and drank to their welfare.
 Wiping the foam from his lip, he solemnly bowed and departed,
 While in silence the others sat and mused by the fireside,
 Till Evangeline brought the draught-board out of its corner.
 Soon was the game begun. In friendly contention the old
 men 345

Laughed at each lucky hit, or unsuccessful manœuvre,
 Laughed when a man was crowned, or a breach was made in
 the king-row.

Meanwhile apart, in the twilight gloom of a window's embrasure,
 Sat the lovers, and whispered together, beholding the moon
 rise

Over the pallid sea and the silvery mist of the meadows. 350
Silently one by one, in the infinite meadows of heaven,
Blossomed the lovely stars, the forget-me-nots of the angels.

Thus was the evening passed. Anon the bell from the belfry
Rang out the hour of nine, the village curfew, and straightway
Rose the guests and departed ; and silence reigned in the
household. 355

Many a farewell word and a sweet good-night on the door-
step
Lingered long in Evangeline's heart, and filled it with glad-
ness.

Carefully then were covered the embers that glowed on the
hearth-stone,

And on the oaken stairs resounded the tread of the farmer.
Soon with a soundless step the foot of Evangeline fol-
lowed, 360

Up the staircase moved a luminous space in the darkness,
Lighted less by the lamp than the shining face of the maiden.
Silent she passed through the hall, and entered the door of her
chamber.

Simple that chamber was, with its curtains of white, and its
clothes-press

Ample and high, on whose spacious shelves were carefully
folded 365

Linen and woollen stuffs, by the hand of Evangeline woven.
This was the precious dower she would bring to her husband
in marriage,

Better than flocks and herds, being proofs of her skill as a
house-wife.

Soon she extinguished her lamp, for the mellow and radiant
moonlight

Streamed through the windows, and lighted the room, till the
heart of the maiden 370

Swelled and obeyed its power, like the tremulous tides of the
ocean.

Ah! she was fair, exceeding fair to behold, as she stood with
Naked snow-white feet on the gleaming floor of her chamber!
Little she dreamed that below, among the trees of the orchard,
Waited her lover and watched for the gleam of her lamp and
her shadow. 375

Yet were her thoughts of him, and at times a feeling of sadness
Passed o'er her soul, as the sailing shade of clouds in the moon-
light

Flitted across the floor and darkened the room for a moment.
And, as she gazed from the window, she saw serenely the moon
pass

Forth from the folds of a cloud, and one star follow her foot-
steps, 380

As out of Abraham's tent young Ishmael wandered with
Hagar.

IV.

Pleasantly rose next morn the sun on the village of Grand-
Pré.

Pleasantly gleamed in the soft, sweet air the Basin of Minas,
Where the ships, with their wavering shadows, were riding at
anchor.

Life had long been astir in the village, and clamorous
labour 380

Knocked with its hundred hands at the golden gates of the
morning.

Now from the country around, from the farms and neighbouring
hamlets,

Came in their holiday dresses the blithe Acadian peasants.

Many a glad good-morrow and jocund laugh from the young
folk

Made the bright air brighter, as up from the numerous
meadows, 390

Where no path could be seen but the track of wheels in the
greensward,

Group after group appeared, and joined, or passed on the high-
way.

Long ere noon, in the village all sounds of labour were silenced.
Thronged were the streets with people ; and noisy groups at
the house-doors

Sat in the cheerful sun, and rejoiced and gossiped together. 395
Every house was an inn, where all were welcomed and feasted ;
For with this simple people, who lived like brothers together,
All things were held in common, and what one had was
another's.

Yet under Benedict's roof hospitality seemed more abundant ;
For Evangeline stood among the guests of her father ; 400
Bright was her face with smiles, and words of welcome and
gladness

Fell from her beautiful lips, and blessed the cup as she gave it.

Under the open sky, in the odorous air of the orchard,
Stript of its golden fruit, was spread the feast of betrothal.
There in the shade of the porch were the priest and the notary
seated ; 504

There good Benedict sat, and sturdy Basil the blacksmith.
Not far withdrawn from these, by the cider-press and the
beehives,

Michael the fiddler was placed, with the gayest of hearts and
of waistcoats.

Shadow and light from the leaves alternately played on his
snow-white

Hair, as it waved in the wind ; and the jolly face of the
fiddler 410

Glowed like a living coal when the ashes are blown from the
embers.

Gayly the old man sang to the vibrant sound of his fiddle,

Tous les Bourgeois de Chartres, and *Le Carillon de Dunkerque*,
And anon with his wooden shoes beat time to the music.

Merrily, merrily whirled the wheels of the dizzying dances 415
Under the orchard-trees and down the path to the meadows ;
Old folk and young together, and children mingled among
them.

Fairest of all the maids was Evangeline, Benedict's daughter !
Noblest of all the youths was Gabriel, son of the blacksmith !

So passed the morning away. And lo ! with a summons
sonorous 420

Sounded the bell from its tower, and over the meadows a drum
beat.

Thronged ere long was the church with men. Without, in
the churchyard,

Waited the women. They stood by the graves, and hung on
the headstones

Garlands of autumn-leaves and evergreens fresh from the
forest.

Then came the guard from the ships, and marching proudly
among them 425

Entered the sacred portal. With a loud and dissonant clangor
Echoed the sound of their brazen drums from ceiling and case-
ment,—

Echoed a moment only, and slowly the ponderous portal
Closed, and in silence the crowd awaited the will of the
soldiers.

Then uprose their commander, and spake from the steps of the
altar, 430

Holding aloft in his hands, with its seals, the royal commission.
“You are convened this day,” he said, “by his Majesty’s
orders.

Clement and kind has he been ; but how you have answered
his kindness,

Let your own hearts reply! To my natural make and my
temper

Painful the task is I do, which to you I know must be
grievous. 435

Yet must I bow and obey, and deliver the will of our monarch:
Namely, that all your lands, and dwellings, and cattle of all
kinds

Forfeited be to the crown; and that you yourselves from this
province

Be transported to other lands. God grant you may dwell
there

Ever as faithful subjects, a happy and peaceable people! 440

Prisoners now I declare you, for such is his Majesty's pleasure!"

As, when the air is serene in the sultry solstice of summer,
Suddenly gathers a storm, and the deadly sling of the hail-
stones

Beats down the farmer's corn in the field, and shatters his
windows,

Hiding the sun, and strewing the ground with thatch from the
house-roofs, 445

Bellowing fly the herds, and seek to break their enclosures;
So on the hearts of the people descended the words of the
speaker.

Silent a moment they stood in speechless wonder, and then
rose

Louder and ever louder a wail of sorrow and anger,
And, by one impulse moved, they madly rushed to the door-
way. 450

Vain was the hope of escape; and cries and fierce imprecations
Rang through the house of prayer; and high o'er the heads of
the others

Rose, with his arms uplifted, the figure of Basil the black-
smith,

As, on a stormy sea, a spar is tossed by the billows.

Flushed was his face and distorted with passion ; and wildly
he shouted,— 455

“Down with the tyrants of England ! we never have sworn
them allegiance !

Death to these foreign soldiers, who seize on our homes and
our harvests !”

More he fain would have said, but the merciless hand of a
soldier

Smote him upon the mouth, and dragged him down to the
pavement.

In the midst of the strife and tumult of angry conten-
tion, 460

Lo ! the door of the chancel opened, and Father Felician
Entered, with serious mien, and ascended the steps of the altar.
Raising his reverend hand, with a gesture he awed into silence
All that clamourous throng ; and thus he spake to his people ;
Deep were his tones and solemn ; in accents measured and
mournful 465

Spake he, as, after the tocsin's alarm, distinctly the clock
strikes.

“What is this that ye do, my children ? what madness has
seized you ?

Forty years of my life have I laboured among you, and taught
you,

Not in word alone, but in deed, to love one another !

Is this the fruit of my toils, of my vigils and prayers and
privations ? 470

Have you so soon forgotten all lessons of love and forgiveness ?
This is the house of the Prince of Peace, and would you pro-
fane it

Thus with violent deeds and hearts overflowing with hatred ?

Lo ! where the crucified Christ from His cross is gazing upon
you !

See! in those sorrowful eyes what meekness and holy
compassion! 475

Hark! how those lips still repeat the prayer, 'O Father,
forgive them!'

Let us repeat that prayer in the hour when the wicked assail us,
Let us repeat it now, and say, 'O Father, forgive them!'"

Few were his words of rebuke, but deep in the hearts of his
people

Sank they, and sobs of contrition succeeded the passionate out-
break, 480

While they repeated his prayer, and said, "O Father, forgive
them!"

Then came the evening service. The tapers gleamed from
the altar;

Fervent and deep was the voice of the priest, and the people
responded,

Not with their lips alone, but their hearts; and the Ave
Maria

Sang they, and fell on their knees, and their souls, with
devotion translated, 485

Rose on the ardour of prayer, like Elijah ascending to heaven.

Meanwhile had spread in the village the tidings of ill, and
on all sides

Wandered, wailing, from house to house the women and
children.

Long at her father's door Evangeline stood, with her right
hand

Shielding her eyes from the level rays of the sun, that, des-
cending, 490

Lighted the village street with mysterious splendour, and roofed
each

Peasant's cottage with golden thatch, and emblazoned its
windows.

Long within had been spread the snow-white cloth on the table ;
 There stood the wheaten loaf, and the honey fragrant with
 wild flowers ;
 There stood the tankard of ale, and the cheese fresh brought
 from the dairy ; 495
 And at the head of the board the great arm-chair of the
 farmer.

Thus did Evangeline wait at her father's door, as the sunset
 Threw the long shadows of trees o'er the broad ambrosial
 meadows.

Ah ! on her spirit within a deeper shadow had fallen,
 And from the fields of her soul a fragrance celestial
 ascended,— 500

Charity, meekness, love, and hope, and forgiveness, and
 patience !

Then, all-forgetful of self, she wandered into the village,
 Cheering with looks and words the mournful hearts of the
 women,

As o'er the darkening fields with lingering steps they departed,
 Urged by their household cares and the weary feet of their
 children. 505

Down sank the great red sun, and in golden, glimmering
 vapours

Veiled the light of his face, like the Prophet descending from
 Sinai.

Sweetly over the village the bell of the Angelus sounded.

Meanwhile, amid the gloom, by the church Evangeline
 lingered.

All was silent within ; and in vain at the door and the
 windows 510

Stood she, and listened and looked, until, overcome by emotion,
 "Gabriel!" cried she aloud with tremulous voice ; but no
 answer

Came from the graves of the dead, nor the gloomier grave of
the living.

Slowly at length she returned to the tenantless house of her
father.

Smouldered the fire on the hearth, on the board was the supper
untasted. 515

Empty and drear was each room, and haunted with phantoms
of terror.

Sadly echoed her step on the stair and the floor of her chamber.
In the dead of the night she heard the disconsolate rain fall
Loud on the withered leaves of the sycamore-tree by the
window.

Keenly the lightning flashed ; and the voice of the echoing
thunder 520

Told her that God was in heaven, and governed the world He
created !

Then she remembered the tale she had heard of the justice of
heaven ;

Soothed was her troubled soul, and she peacefully slumbered
till morning.

V.

Four times the sun had risen and set ; and now on the fifth
day

Cheerily called the cock to the sleeping maids of the farm-
house. 525

Soon o'er the yellow fields, in silent and mournful procession,
Came from the neighbouring hamlets the Acadian
women,

Driving in ponderous wains their household goods to the sea-
shore,

Pausing and looking back to gaze once more on their dwellings.
Ere they were shut from sight by the winding road and the
woodland. 530

Close at their sides their children ran, and urged on the
 oxen,
 While in their little hands they clasped some fragments of
 playthings.

Thus to the Gaspereau's mouth they hurried ; and there on
 the sea-beach

Piled in confusion lay the household goods of the peasants.
 All day long between the shore and the ships did the boats
 ply ;

All day long the wains came labouring down from the village.
 Late in the afternoon, when the sun was near to his setting,
 Echoed far o'er the fields came the roll of drums from the
 churchyard.

Thither the women and children thronged. On a sudden the
 church-doors

Opened, and forth came the guard, and marching in gloomy
 procession

Followed the long-imprisoned, but patient, Acadian farmers.
 Even as pilgrims, who journey afar from their homes and their
 country,

Sing as they go, and in singing forget they are weary and way-
 worn,

So with songs on their lips the Acadian peasants descended
 Down from the church to the shore, amid their wives and
 their daughters.

Foremost the young men came ; and, raising together their
 voices,

Sang with tremulous lips a chant of the Catholic Missions :—
 " Sacred heart of the Saviour ! O inexhaustible fountain !
 Fill our hearts this day with strength and submission and
 patience ! "

Then the old men, as they marched, and the women that stood
 by the wayside

Joined in the sacred psalm, and the birds in the sunshine
above them

Mingled their notes therewith, like voices of spirits departed.
Half-way down to the shore Evangeline waited in silence,
Not overcome with grief, but strong in the hour of affliction,—
Calmly and sadly she waited, until the procession approached
her,

555

And she beheld the face of Gabriel pale with emotion.
Tears then filled her eyes, and, eagerly running to meet him,
Clasped she his hands, and laid her head on his shoulder, and
whispered,—

“Gabriel! be of good cheer! for if we love one another
Nothing, in truth, can harm us, whatever mischances may
happen!”

560

Smiling she spake these words; then suddenly paused, for her
father

Saw she, slowly advancing. Alas! how changed was his aspect!
Gone was the glow from his cheek, and the fire from his eye,
and his footstep

Heavier seemed with the weight of the heavy heart in his
bosom.

But with a smile and a sigh, she clasped his neck and embraced
him,

565

Speaking words of endearment where words of comfort availed
not.

Thus to the Gaspereau's mouth moved on that mournful pro-
cession.

There disorder prevailed, and the tumult and stir of em-
barking.

Busily plied the freighted boats; and in the confusion
Wives were torn from their husbands, and mothers, too late,
saw their children

570

Left on the land, extending their arms, with wildest entreaties.

So unto separate ships were Basil and Gabriel carried,
While in despair on the shore Evangeline stood with her
father.

Half the task was not done when the sun went down, and the
twilight

Deepened and darkened around ; and in haste the refluxent
ocean 575

Fled away from the shore, and left the line of the sand-beach
Covered with waifs of the tide, with kelp and the slippery sea-
weed.

Farther back in the midst of the household goods and the
waggons,

Like to a gipsy camp, or a leaguer after a battle,
All escape cut off by the sea, and the sentinels near them, 580

Lay encamped for the night the houseless Acadian farmers.

Back to its nethermost caves retreated the bellowing ocean,
Dragging adown the beach the rattling pebbles, and leaving
Inland and far up the shore the stranded boats of the sailors.
Then, as the night descended, the herds returned from their
pastures ; 585

Sweet was the moist still air with the odor of milk from their
udders ;

Lowing they waited, and long, at the well-known bars of the
farm-yard,—

Waited and looked in vain for the voice and the hand of the
milkmaid.

Silence reigned in the streets ; from the church no Angelus
sounded,

Rose no smoke from the roofs, and gleamed no lights from the
windows. 590

But on the shores meanwhile the evening fires had been
kindled,

Built of the drift-wood thrown on the sands from wrecks in
the tempest.

Round them shapes of gloom and sorrowful faces were gathered,
Voices of women were heard, and of men, and the crying of
children.

Onward from fire to fire, as from hearth to hearth in his
parish, 595

Wandered the faithful priest, consoling and blessing and
cheering,

Like unto shipwrecked Paul on Melita's desolate sea-shore.

Thus he approached the place where Evangeline sat with her
father,

And in the flickering light beheld the face of the old man,
Haggard and hollow and wan, and without either thought or
emotion, 600

E'en as the face of a clock from which the hands have been
taken.

Vainly Evangeline strove with words and caresses to cheer
him,

Vainly offered him food ; yet he moved not, he looked not, he
spake not,

But, with a vacant stare, ever gazed at the flickering fire-light.

"*Benedicite !*" murmured the priest in tones of compassion. 605

More he fain would have said, but his heart was full, and his
accents

Faltered and paused on his lips, as the feet of a child on a
threshold,

Hushed by the scene he beholds, and the awful presence of
sorrow.

Silently, therefore, he laid his hand on the head of the maiden.

Raising his tearful eyes to the silent stars that above
them 610

Moved on their way, unperturbed by the wrongs and sorrows of
mortals.

Then sat he down at her side, and they wept together in
silence.

Suddenly rose from the south a light, as in autumn the
blood-red

Moon climbs the crystal walls of heaven, and o'er the horizon
Titan-like stretches its hundred hands upon mountain and
meadow, 615

Seizing the rocks and the rivers, and piling huge shadows
together.

Broader and ever broader it gleamed on the roofs of the
village,

Gleamed on the sky and the sea, and the ships that lay in the
roadstead.

Columns of shining smoke uprose, and flashes of flame were
Thrust through their folds and withdrawn, like the quivering
hands of a martyr. 620

Then as the wind seized the gleeds and the burning thatch,
and, uplifting,

Whirled them aloft through the air, at once from a hundred
house-tops

Started the sheeted smoke with flashes of flames intermingled.

These things beheld in dismay the crowd on the shore and
on shipboard.

Speechless at first they stood, then cried aloud in their an-
guish, 625

"We shall behold no more our homes in the village of Grand-
Pré!"

Loud on a sudden the cocks began to crow in the farm-yards,
Thinking the day had dawned; and anon the lowing of cattle
Came on the evening breeze, by the barking of dogs interrupted.
Then rose a sound of dread, such as startles the sleeping en-
campments 630

Far in the western prairies of forests that skirt the Nebraska,
When the wild horses affrighted sweep by with the speed of
the whirlwind,

Or the loud bellowing herds of buffaloes rush to the river.
Such was the sound that arose on the night, as the herds and
the horses
Broke through their folds and fences, and madly rushed o'er
the meadows. 635

Overwhelmed with the sight, yet speechless the priest and
the maiden
Gazed on the scene of terror that reddened and widened before
them ;
And as they turned at length to speak to their silent
companion,
Lo! from his seat he had fallen, and stretched abroad on the
seashore
Motionless lay his form, from which the soul had departed. 640
Slowly the priest uplifted the lifeless head, and the maiden
Knelt at her father's side, and wailed aloud in her terror.
Then in a swoon she sank, and lay with her head on his bosom.
Through the long night she lay in deep, oblivious slumber ;
And when she woke from the trance, she beheld a multitude
near her. 645
Faces of friends she beheld, that were mournfully gazing upon
her,
Pallid, with tearful eyes, and looks of saddest compassion.
Still the blaze of the burning village illumined the landscape,
Reddened the sky overhead, and gleamed on the faces around
her,
And like the day of doom it seemed to her wavering senses. 650
Then a familiar voice she heard, as it said to the people,—
“ Let us bury him here by the sea. When a happier season
Brings us again to our homes from the unknown land of our exile,
Then shall his sacred dust be piously laid in the churchyard.”
Such were the words of the priest. And there in haste by the
sea-side, 655

Having the glare of the burning village for funeral torches,
 But without bell or book, they buried the farmer of Grand-Pré.
 And as the voice of the priest repeated the service of sorrow,
 Lo! with a mournful sound like the voice of a great congrega-
 tion,

Solemnly answered the sea, and mingled its roar with the
 dirges, 630

'Twas the returning tide, that afar from the waste of the ocean,
 With the first dawn of the day, came heaving and hurrying
 landward.

Then recommenced once more the stir and noise of embarking;
 And with the ebb of the tide the ships sailed out of the harbour,
 Leaving behind them the dead on the shore, and the village in
 ruins. 635

PART THE SECOND.

I.

MANY a weary year had passed since the burning of Grand-
 Pré,

When on the falling tide the freighted vessels departed,
 Bearing a nation, with all its household gods, into exile,
 Exile without an end, and without an example in story.
 Far asunder, on separate coasts, the Acadians landed; 670
 Scattered were they, like flakes of snow, when the wind from
 the northeast

Strikes aslant through the fogs that darken the Banks of
 Newfoundland.

Friendless, homeless, hopeless, they wandered from city to
 city,

From the cold lakes of the North to sultry Southern savannas,—
 From the bleak shores of the sea to the lands where the Father
 of Waters 75

Seizes the hills in his hands, and drags them down to the ocean,

Deep in their sands to bury the scattered bones of the mammoth.

Friends they sought and homes ; and many, despairing, heart-broken,

Asked of the earth but a grave, and no longer a friend nor a fireside.

Written their history stands on tablets of stone in the church-yards. 680

Long among them was seen a maiden who waited and wandered, Lowly and meek in spirit, and patiently suffering all things.

Fair was she and young ; but, alas ! before her extended, Dreary and vast and silent, the desert of life, with its pathway Marked by the graves of those who had sorrowed and suffered before her, 685

Passions long extinguished, and hopes long dead and abandoned, As the emigrant's way o'er the Western desert is marked by Camp-fires long consumed, and bones that bleach in the sunshine.

Something there was in her life incomplete, imperfect, unfinished ;

As if a morning of June, with all its music and sunshine, 690 Suddenly paused in the sky, and, fading, slowly descended Into the east again, from whence it late had arisen.

Sometimes she lingered in towns, till, urged by the fever within her,

Urged by a restless longing, the hunger and thirst of the spirit, She would commence again her endless search and endeavour ; 695 Sometimes in churchyards strayed, and gazed on the crosses and tombstones,

Sat by some nameless grave, and thought that perhaps in its bosom

He was already at rest, and she longed to slumber beside him.

Sometimes a rumor, a hearsay, an inarticulate whisper,
 Came with its airy hand to point and beckon her forward. 700
 Sometimes she spake with those who had seen her beloved and
 known him.

But it was long ago, in some far-off place or forgotten.
 "Gabriel Lajeunesse!" they said; "Oh, yes! we have seen
 him.

He was with Basil the blacksmith, and both have gone to the
 prairies;
 Coureurs-des-bois are they, and famous hunters and trap-
 pers." 705

"Gabriel Lajeunesse!" said others; "Oh, yes! we have seen
 him.

He is a voyageur from the lowlands of Louisiana."
 Then would they say, "Dear child! why dream and wait for
 him longer?

Are there not other youths as fair as Gabriel? others
 Who have hearts as tender and true, and spirits as loyal? 710
 Here is Baptiste Leblanc, the notary's son, who has loved thee
 Many a tedious year; come, give him thy hand and be happy!
 Thou art too fair to be left to braid St. Catherine's tresses."

Then would Evangeline answer, serenely but sadly, "I cannot!
 Whither my heart has gone, there follows my hand, and not
 elsewhere. 715

For when the heart goes before, like a lamp, and illumines the
 pathway,

Many things are made clear, that else lie hidden in darkness."
 Thereupon the priest, her friend and father confessor,
 Said with a smile, "O daughter! thy God thus speaketh within
 thee!

Talk not of wasted affection, affection never was wasted; 720
 If it enrich not the heart of another, its waters, returning
 Back to their springs, like the rain, shall fill them full of re-
 freshment;

That which the fountain sends forth returns again to the fountain.

Patience ; accomplish thy labour ; accomplish thy work of affection !

Sorrow and silence are strong, and patient endurance is godlike. 725

Therefore accomplish thy labour of love, till the heart is made godlike,

Purified, strengthened, perfected, and rendered more worthy of heaven ! ”

Cheered by the good man's words, Evangeline laboured and waited.

Still in her heart she heard the funeral dirge of the ocean,
But with its sound there was mingled a voice that whispered,
“ Despair not ! ” 730

Thus did that poor soul wander in want and cheerless discomfort,

Bleeding, barefooted, over the shards and thorns of existence.
Let me essay, O Muse ! to follow the wanderer's footsteps ;--
Not through each devious path, each changeful year of existence ;

But as a traveller follows a streamlet's course through the valley : 735

Far from its margin at times, and seeing the gleam of its water
Here and there, in some open space, and at intervals only ;

Then drawing nearer its banks, through sylvan glooms that conceal it,

Though he behold it not, he can hear its continuous murmur ;
Happy, at length, if he find a spot where it reaches an outlet. 740

II.

It was the month of May. Far down the Beautiful River,
Past the Ohio shore and past the mouth of the Wabash,
Into the golden stream of the broad and swift Mississippi,

Floated a cumbrous boat, that was rowed by Acadian boatmen.
It was a band of exiles: a raft, as it were, from the ship-
wrecked 745

Nation, scattered along the coast, now floating together,
Bound by the bonds of a common belief and a common mis-
fortune;

Men and women and children, who, guided by hope or by hear-
say,

Sought for their kith and their kin among the few-acred
farmers

On the Acadian coast, and the prairies of fair Opelousas. 750
With them Evangeline went, and her guide, the Father
Felician.

Onward o'er sunken sands, through a wilderness sombre with
forests,

Day after day they glided adown the turbulent river;

Night after night, by their blazing fires, encamped on its
borders.

Now through rushing chutes, among green islands, where
plumelike 755

Cotton-trees nodded their shadowy crests, they swept with the
current,

Then emerged into broad lagoons, where silvery sand-bars

Lay in the stream, and along the wimpling waves of their
margin,

Shining with snow-white plumes, large flocks of pelicans waded.

Level the landscape grew, and along the shores of the river, 760

Shaded by china-trees, in the midst of luxuriant gardens,

Stood the houses of planters, with negro-cabins and dove-cots.

They were approaching the region where reigns perpetual
summer,

Where through the Golden Coast, and groves of orange and
citron,

Sweeps with majestic curve the river away to the eastward. 765

They, too, swerved from their course ; and, entering the Bayou
of Plaquemine,

Soon were lost in a maze of sluggish and devious waters,
Which, like a network of steel, extended in every direction.
Over their heads the towering and tenebrous boughs of the
cypress

Met in a dusky arch, and trailing mosses in mid-air 770

Waved like banners that hang on the walls of ancient cathedrals.
Deathlike the silence seemed, and unbroken, save by the herons
Home to their roosts in the cedar-trees returning at sunset,
Or by the owl, as he greeted the moon with demoniac laughter.
Lovely the moonlight was as it glanced and gleamed on the
water, 775

Gleamed on the columns of cypress and cedar sustaining the
arches,

Down through whose broken vaults it fell like as through
chinks in a ruin.

Dreamlike, and indistinct, and strange were all things around
them ;

And o'er their spirits there came a feeling of wonder and sad-
ness,—

Strange forebodings of ill, unseen and that cannot be com-
passed. 780

As, at the tramp of a horse's hoof on the turf of the prairies,
Far in advance are closed the leaves of the shrinking mimosa,
So, at the hoof-beats of fate, with sad forebodings of evil,
Shrinks and closes the heart, ere the stroke of doom has at-
tained it.

But Evangeline's heart was sustained by a vision, that
faintly 785

Floated before her eyes, and beckoned her on through the
moonlight.

It was the thought of her brain that assumed the shape of a
phantom.

Through those shadowy aisles had Gabriel wandered before
her,
And every stroke of the oar now brought him nearer and
nearer.

Then in his place, at the prow of the boat, rose one of the
oarsmen, 790
And, as a signal sound, if others like them peradventure
Sailed on those gloomy and midnight streams, blew a blast on
his bugle.
Wild through the dark colonnades and corridors leafy the blast
rang,
Breaking the seal of silence and giving tongues to the forest.
Soundless above them the banners of moss just stirred to the
music. 795

Multitudinous echoes awoke and died in the distance,
Over the watery floor, and beneath the reverberant branches ;
But not a voice replied ; no answer came from the darkness ;
And when the echoes had ceased, like a sense of pain was the
silence.

Then Evangeline slept ; but the boatmen rowed through the
midnight, 800
Silent at times, then singing familiar Canadian boatsongs,
Such as they sang of old on their own Acadian rivers,
While through the night were heard the mysterious sounds of
the desert.
Far off,—indistinct,—as of wave or wind in the forest,
Mixed with the whoop of the crane and the roar of the grim
alligator. 805

Thus ere another noon they emerged from the shades ; and
before them
Lay, in the golden sun, the lakes of the Atchafalaya.
Water-lilies in myriads rocked on the slight undulations
Made by the passing oars, and, resplendent in beauty, the lotus

Lifted her golden crown above the heads of the boatmen, 810
Faint was the air with the odorous breath of magnolia blossoms,

And with the heat of noon ; and numberless sylvan islands,
Fragrant and thickly embowered with blossoming hedges of roses,

Near to whose shore they glided along, invited to slumber.
Soon by the fairest of these their weary oars were suspended. 815

Under the boughs of Wachita willows, that grew by the margin,
Safely their boat was moored ; and scattered about on the greensward,

Tired with their midnight toil, the weary travellers slumbered.
Over them vast and high extended the cope of a cedar.
Swinging from its great arms, the trumpet-flower and the grapevine 820

Hung their ladder of ropes aloft like the ladder of Jacob,
On whose pendulous stairs the angels ascending, descending,
Were the swift humming-birds, that flitted from blossom to blossom.

Such was the vision Evangeline saw as she slumbered beneath it.

Filled was her heart with love, and the dawn of an opening heaven 825

Lighted her soul in sleep with the glory of regions celestial.

Nearer, ever nearer, among the numberless islands,
Darted a light, swift boat, that sped away o'er the water,
Urged on its course by the sinewy arms of hunters and trappers.

Northward its prow was turned, to the land of the bison and beaver. 830

At the helm sat a youth, with countenance thoughtful and careworn,

Dark and neglected locks overshadowed his brow, and a sadness
 ness

Somewhat beyond his years on his face was legibly written.
 Gabriel was it, who, weary with waiting, unhappy and restless,
 Sought in the Western wilds oblivion of self and of sorrow. 835
 Swiftly they glided along, close under the lee of the island,
 But by the opposite bank, and behind a screen of palmettos ;
 So that they saw not the boat, where it lay concealed in the
 willows ;

All undisturbed by the dash of their oars, and unseen, were
 the sleepers ;

Angel of God was there none to awaken the slumbering
 maiden. 840

Swiftly they glided away, like the shade of a cloud on the
 prairie.

After the sound of their oars on the tholes had died in the
 distance,

As from a magic trance the sleepers awoke, and the maiden
 Said with a sigh to the friendly priest, "O Father Felician !
 Something says in my heart that near me Gabriel wanders. 845
 Is it a foolish dream, an idle and vague superstition ?

Or has an angel passed, and revealed the truth to my spirit ?"
 Then, with a blush she added, "Alas for my credulous fancy !
 Unto ears like thine such words as these have no meaning."

But made answer the reverend man, and he smiled as he
 answered,— 850

"Daughter, thy words are not idle ; nor are they to me with-
 out meaning,

Feeling is deep and still ; and the word that floats on the
 surface

Is as the tossing buoy, that betrays where the anchor is
 hidden.

Therefore trust to thy heart, and to what the world calls illu-
 sions.

Gabriel truly is near thee; for not far away to the south-
ward,

855

On the banks of the Têche, are the towns of St. Maur and St.
Martin.

There the long-wandering bride shall be given again to her
bridegroom,

There the long-absent pastor regain his flock and his sheepfold.
Beautiful is the land, with its prairies and forests of fruit-
trees;

Under the feet a garden of flowers, and the bluest of heavens 860
Bending above, and resting its dome on the walls of the forest.
They who dwell there have named it the Eden of Louisiana."

With these words of cheer they arose and continued their
journey.

Softly the evening came. The sun from the western horizon
Like a magician extended his golden wand o'er the landscape; 865
Twinkling vapours arose; and sky and water and forest
Seemed all on fire at the touch, and melted and mingled to-
gether.

Hanging between two skies, a cloud with edges of silver,
Floated the boat, with its dripping oars, on the motionless
water.

Filled was Evangeline's heart with inexpressible sweetness. 870
Touched by the magic spell, the sacred fountains of feeling
Glowed with the light of love, as the skies and waters around
her.

Then from a neighbouring thicket the mocking-bird, wildest of
singers,

Swinging aloft on a willow spray that hung o'er the water,
Shook from his little throat such floods of delirious music, 875
That the whole air and the woods and the waves seemed silent
to listen.

Plaintive at first were the tones and sad; then soaring to muel-
ness

Seemed they to follow or guide the revel of frenzied Bacchantes.
 Single notes were then heard, in sorrowful, low lamentation ;
 Till, having gathered them all, he flung them abroad in
 derision, 880

As when, after a storm, a gust of wind through the tree-tops
 Shakes down the rattling rain in a crystal shower on the
 branches.

With such a prelude as this, and hearts that throbbed with
 emotion,

Slowly they entered the Têche, where it flows through the
 Opelousas,

And, through the amber air, above the crest of the wood-
 land, 885

Saw the column of smoke that arose from a neighbouring
 dwelling ;—

Sounds of a horn they heard, and the distant lowing of cattle.

III.

Near to the banks of the river, o'ershadowed by oaks from
 whose branches

Garlands of Spanish moss and of mystic mistletoe flaunted,
 Such as the Druids cut down with golden hatchets at Yule-
 tide, 890

Stood, secluded and still, the house of the herdsman. A garden
 Girded it round about with a belt of luxuriant blossoms,
 Filling the air with fragrance. The house itself was of timbers
 Hewn from the cypress-tree, and carefully fitted together.

Large and low was the roof ; and on slender columns sup-
 ported, 895

Rose-wreathed, vine-encircled, a broad and spacious veranda,
 Haunt of the humming-bird and the bee, extended around it.
 At each end of the house, amid the flowers of the garden,
 Stationed the dove-cots were, as love's perpetual symbol,
 Scenes of endless wooing, and endless contentions of rivals. 900

Silence reigned o'er the place. The line of shadow and sunshine
Ran near the tops of the trees ; but the house itself was in
shadow,

And from its chimney-top, ascending and slowly expanding
Into the evening air, a thin blue column of smoke rose.

In the rear of the house, from the garden gate, ran a path-
way

905

Through the great groves of oak to the skirts of the limitless
prairie,

Into whose sea of flowers the sun was slowly descending.

Full in his track of light, like ships with shadowy canvas

Hanging loose from their spars in a motionless calm in the
tropics,

Stood a cluster of trees, with tangled cordage of grapevines. 910

Just where the woodlands met the flowery surf of the prairie,

Mounted upon his horse, with Spanish saddle and stirrups,

Sat a herdsman, arrayed in gaiters and doublet of deerskin.

Broad and brown was the face that from under the Spanish
sombbrero

Gazed on the peaceful scene, with the lordly look of its
master.

915

Round about him were numberless herds of kine that were
grazing

Quietly in the meadows, and breathing the vapoury freshness

That uprose from the river, and spread itself over the lands-
scape.

Slowly lifting the horn that hung at his side, and expanding

Fully his broad, deep chest, he blew a blast, that resounded 920

Wildly and sweet and far, through the still damp air of the
evening.

Suddenly out of the grass the long white horns of the cattle

Rose like flakes of foam on the adverse currents of ocean.

Silent a moment they gazed, then bellowing rushed o'er the
prairie,

And the whole mass became a cloud, a shade in the distance. 925

Then, as the herdsman turned to the house, through the gate of the garden

Saw he the forms of the priest and the maiden advancing to meet him.

Suddenly down from his horse he sprang in amazement, and forward

Rushed with extended arms and exclamations of wonder ;

When they beheld his face, they recognized Basil the blacksmith. 930

Hearty his welcome was, as he led his guests to the garden.

There in an arbor of roses with endless question and answer

Gave they vent to their hearts, and renewed their friendly embraces,

Laughing and weeping by turns, or sitting silent and thoughtful,

Thoughtful, for Gabriel came not ; and now dark doubts and misgivings 935

Stole o'er the maiden's heart ; and Basil, somewhat embarrassed,

Broke the silence and said, " If you came by the Atchafalaya,

How have you nowhere encountered my Gabriel's boat on the bayous ? "

Over Evangeline's face at the words of Basil a shade passed.

Tears came into her eyes, and she said, with a tremulous accent, 940

" Gone? is Gabriel gone? " and, concealing her face on his shoulder,

All her o'erburdened heart gave way, and she wept and lamented.

Then the good Basil said,—and his heart grew blithe as he said it,—

" Be of good cheer, my child ; it is only to-day he departed.

Foolish boy ! he has left me alone with my herds and my horses. 945

Moody and restless grown, and tried and troubled, his spirit
 Could no longer endure the calm of this quiet existence.
 Thinking ever of thee, uncertain and sorrowful ever,
 Ever silent, or speaking only of thee and his troubles,
 He at length had become so tedious to men and to maidens, 950
 Tedious even to me, that at length I bethought me, and sent
 him

Unto the town of Adayes to trade for mules with the Spaniards.
 Thence he will follow the Indian trails to the Ozark Mountains,
 Hunting for furs in the forests, on rivers trapping the beaver.
 Therefore be of good cheer; we will follow the fugitive lover; 955
 He is not far on his way, and the Fates and the streams are
 against him.

Up and away to-morrow, and through the red dew of the
 morning,
 We will follow him fast, and bring him back to his prison."

Then glad voices were heard, and up from the banks of the
 river,

Borne aloft on his comrades' arms, came Michael the fiddler. 960
 Long under Basil's roof had he lived, like a god on Olympus,
 Having no other care than dispensing music to mortals.
 Far renowned was he for his silver locks and his fiddle.
 "Long live Michael," they cried, "our brave Acadian minstrel!"
 As they bore him aloft in triumphal procession; and straight-
 way 965

Father Felician advanced with Evangeline, greeting the old
 man

Kindly and of and recalling the past, while Basil enraptured,
 Hailed with hilarious joy his old companions and gossips,
 Laughing loud and long, and embracing mothers and daughters.
 Much they marvelled to see the wealth of the ci-devant black-
 smith, 970

All his domains and his herds, and his patriarchal demeanour;

Much they marvelled to hear his tales of the soil and the climate,

And of the prairies, whose numberless herds were his who would take them ;

Each one thought in his heart, that he, too, would go and do likewise.

Thus they ascended the steps, and, crossing the breezy veranda,

975

Entered the hall of the house, where already the supper of Basil Waited his late return ; and they rested and feasted together.

Over the joyous feast the sudden darkness descended.

All was silent without, and illuming the landscape with silver, Fair rose the dewy moon and the myriad stars ; but within doors,

980

Brighter than these, shone the faces of friends in the glimmering lamplight.

Then from his station aloft, at the head of the table, the herdsman

Poured forth his heart and his wine together in endless profusion.

Lighting his pipe that was filled with sweet Natchitoches tobacco,

Thus he spake to his guests, who listened and smiled as they listened :--

985

“ Welcome once more, my friends, who long have been friendless and homeless,

Welcome once more to a home, that is better perchance than the old one !

Here no hungry winter congeals our blood like the rivers ;

Here no stony ground provokes the wrath of the farmer ;

Smoothly the ploughshare runs through the soil, as a keel through the water.

990

All the year round the orange-groves are in blossom ; and grass grows

More in a single night than a whole Canadian summer.
Here, too, numberless herds run wild and unclaimed in the
prairies ;
Here, too, lands may be had for the asking, and forests of
timber
With a few blows of the axe are hewn and framed into
houses. 995
After your houses are built, and your fields are yellow with
harvests,
No King George of England shall drive you away from your
homesteads,
Burning your dwellings and barns and stealing your farms and
your cattle."
Speaking these words, he blew a wrathful cloud from his
nostrils,
While his huge, brown hand came thundering down on the
table, 1000
So that the guests all started ; and Father Felician, astounded,
Suddenly paused, with a pinch of snuff half-way to his nostrils.
But the brave Basil resumed, and his words were milder and
gayer :—
"Only beware of the fever, my friends, beware of the fever !
For it is not like that of our cold Acadian climate, 1005
Cured by wearing a spider hung round one's neck in a nut-
shell !"
Then there were voices heard at the door, and footsteps
approaching
Sounded upon the stairs and the floors of the breezy veranda.
It was the neighbouring Creoles and small Acadian planters,
Who had been summoned all to the house of Basil the herds-
man. 1010
Merry the meeting was of ancient comrades and neighbours :
Friend clasped friend in his arms ; and they who before were
as strangers,

Meeting in exile, became straightway as friends to each other,
 Drawn by the gentle bond of a common country together.

But in the neighbouring hall a strain of music, proceeding 1015
 From the accordant strings of Michael's melodious fiddle,
 Broke up all further speech. Away, like children delighted,
 All things forgotten beside, they gave themselves to the mad-
 dening

Whirl of the dizzy dance, as it swept and swayed to the music,
 Dreamlike, with beaming eyes and the rush of fluttering gar-
 ments. 1020

Meanwhile, apart, at the head of the hall, the priest and
 the herdsman

Sat, conversing together of past and present and future ;
 While Evangeline stood like one entranced, for within her
 Olden memories rose, and loud in the midst of the music
 Heard she the sound of the sea, and an irrepressible sad-
 ness 1025

Came o'er her heart, and unseen she stole forth into the
 garden.

Beautiful was the night. Behind the black wall of the forest,
 Tipping its summit with silver, arose the moon. On the river
 Fell here and there through the branches a tremulous gleam of
 the moonlight,

Like the sweet thoughts of love on a darkened and devious
 spirit. 1030

Nearer and round about her, the manifold flowers of the
 garden

Poured out their souls in odors, that were their prayers and
 confession

Unto the night, as it went its way, like a silent Carthusian.
 Fuller of fragrance than they, and as heavy with shadows and
 night-dews,

Hung the heart of the maiden. The calm and the magical
 moonlight 1035

Seemed to inundate her soul with indefinable longings,
As, through the garden gate, and beneath the shade of the
oak-trees,

Passed she along the path to the edge of the measureless prairie.
Silent it lay, with a silvery haze upon it, and fire-flies
Gleaming and floating away in mingled and infinite num-
bers. 1040

Over her head the stars, the thoughts of God in the heavens,
Shone on the eyes of man, who had ceased to marvel and wor-
ship,

Save when a blazing comet was seen on the walls of that temple,
As if a hand had appeared and written upon them, "Upharsin."
And the soul of the maiden, between the stars and the fire-
flies, 1045

Wandered alone, and she cried, "O Gabriel! O my beloved!
Art thou so near unto me, and yet I cannot behold thee?
Art thou so near unto me, and yet thy voice does not reach me?
Ah! how often thy feet have trod this path to the prairie!
Ah! how often thine eyes have looked on the woodlands
around me! 1050

Ah! how often beneath this oak, returning from labour,
Thou hast lain down to rest, and to dream of me in thy
slumbers!

When shall these eyes behold, these arms be folded about
thee?"

Loud and sudden and near the note of a whippoorwill sounded
Like a flute in the woods; and anon, through the neighbouring
thickets, 1055

Farther and farther away it floated and dropped into silence.
"Patience!" whispered the oaks from oracular caverns of
darkness;

And, from the moonlit meadow, a sigh responded, "To-
morrow!"

Bright rose the sun next day; and all the flowers of the
 garden
 Bathed his shining feet with their tears, and anointed his
 tresses 1060
 With the delicious balm that they bore in their vases of
 crystal.
 "Farewell!" said the priest, as he stood at the shadowy
 threshold;
 "See that you bring us the Prodigal Son from his fasting and
 famine,
 And, too, the Foolish Virgin, who slept when the bridegroom
 was coming."
 "Farewell!" answered the maiden, and, smiling, with Basil
 descended 1065
 Down to to the river's brink, where the boatmen already were
 waiting.
 Thus beginning their journey with morning, and sunshine,
 and gladness,
 Swiftly they followed the flight of him who was speeding be-
 fore them,
 Blown by the blast of fate like a dead leaf over the desert.
 Not that day, nor the next, nor yet the day that succeeded, 1070
 Found they trace of his course, in lake or forest or river,
 Nor, after many days, had they found him; but vague and
 uncertain
 Rumours alone were their guides through a wild and desolate
 country;
 Till, at the little inn, of the Spanish town of Adayes,
 Weary and worn, they alighted, and learned from the garrulous
 landlord, 1075
 That on the day before, with horses and guides and companions,
 Gabriel left the village, and took the road of the prairies.

IV.

Far in the West there lies a desert land, where the mountains
Lift, through perpetual snows, their lofty and luminous sum-
mits.

Down from their jagged, deep ravines, where the gorge, like a
gateway, 1080

Opens a passage rude to the wheels of the emigrant's waggon,
Westward the Oregon flows and the Walleway and Owyhee.
Eastward, with devious course, among the Wind-river Moun-
tains,

Through the Sweet-water Valley precipitate leaps the Ne-
braska ;

And to the south, from Fontaine-qui-bout and the Spanish
sierras, 1085

Fretted with sands and rocks, and swept by the wind of the
desert,

Numberless torrents, with ceaseless sound, descend to the ocean,
Like the great chords of a harp, in loud and solemn vibra-
tions.

Spreading between these streams are the wondrous, beautiful
prairies,

Billowy bays of grass ever rolling in shadow and sunshine, 1090

Bright with luxuriant clusters of roses and purple amorphas.

Over them wandered the buffalo herds, and the elk and the
roebuck ;

Over them wandered the wolves, and herds of riderless horses ;
Fires that blast and blight, and winds that are weary with
travel ;

Over them wander the scattered tribes of Ishmael's children, 1095
Staining the desert with blood ; and above their terrible war-
trails

Circles and sails aloft, on pinions majestic, the vulture,
Like the implacable soul of a chieftain slaughtered in battle,

By invisible stairs ascending and scaling the heavens.

Here and there rise smokes from the camps of these savage
marauders ; 1100

Here and there rise groves from the margins of swift running
rivers ;

And the grim, taciturn bear, the anchorite monk of the desert,
Climbs down their dark ravines to dig for roots by the brook-
side,

And over all is the sky, the clear and crystalline heaven,
Like the protecting hand of God inverted above them. 1105

Into this wonderful land, at the base of the Ozark Moun-
tains,

Gabriel far had entered, with hunters and trappers behind him.
Day after day, with their Indian guides, the maiden and Basil
Followed his flying steps, and thought each day to o'ertake him.
Sometimes they saw, or thought they saw, the smoke of his
camp-fire 1110

Rise in the morning air from the distant plain ; but at night-
fall,

When they had reached the place, they found only embers and
ashes.

And, though their hearts were sad at times and their bodies
were weary,

Hope still guided them on, as the magic Fata Morgana
Showed them her lakes of light, that retreated and vanished
before them. 1115

Once, as they sat by their evening fire, there silently
entered

Into the little camp an Indian woman, whose features
Wore deep traces of sorrow, and patience as great as her
sorrow.

She was a Shawnee woman returning home to her people,
From the far-off hunting-grounds of the cruel Camanches, 1120

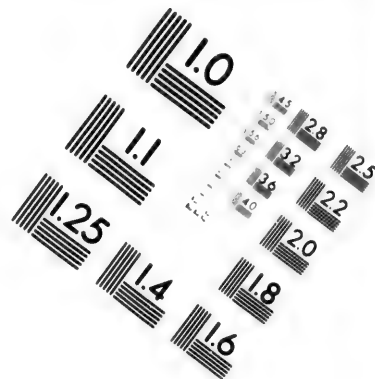
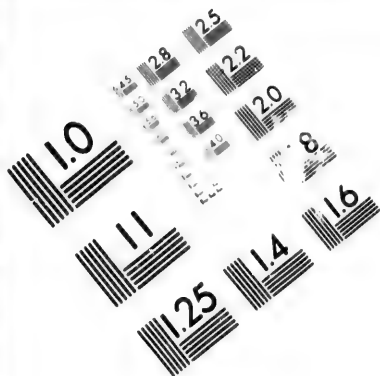
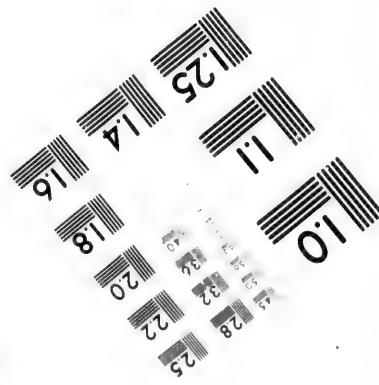
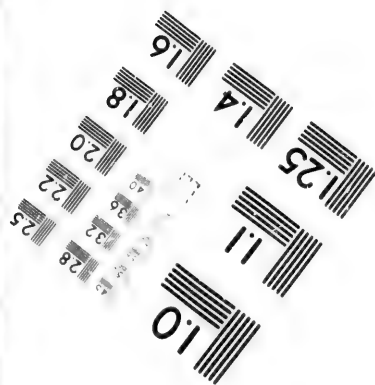
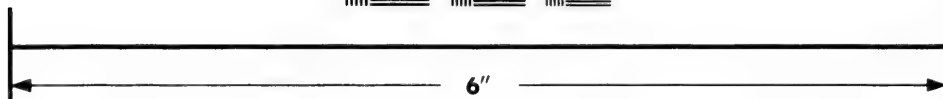
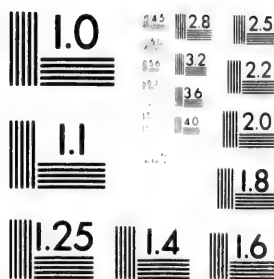


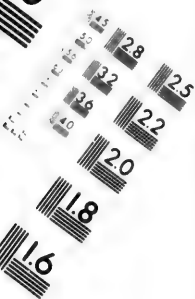
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Where her Canadian husband, a *coureur-des-bois*, had been
murdered.

Touched were their hearts at her story, and warmest and
friendliest welcome

Gave they, with words of cheer, and she sat and feasted
among them

On the buffalo-meat and the venison cooked on the embers.

But when their meal was done, and Basil and all his com-
panions, 1125

Worn with the long day's march and the chase of the deer and
the bison,

Stretched themselves on the ground, and slept where the
quivering fire-light

Flashed on their swarthy cheeks, and their forms wrapped up
in their blankets,

Then at the door of Evangeline's tent she sat and repeated

Slowly, with soft, low voice, and the charm of her Indian
accent, 1130

All the tale of her love, with its pleasures, and pains, and
reverses.

Much Evangeline wept at the tale, and to know that another
Hapless heart like her own had loved and had been dis-
appointed.

Moved to the depths of her soul by pity and woman's compas-
sion,

Yet in her sorrow pleased that one who had suffered was near
her, 1135

She in turn related her love and all its disasters.

Mute with wonder the Shawnee sat, and when she had ended

Still was mute ; but at length, as if a mysterious horror

Passed through her brain, she spake, and repeated the tale of
the Mowis ;

Mowis, the bridegroom of snow, who won and wedded a
maiden, 1140

But, when the morning came, arose and passed from the wig-
wam,

Fading and melting away and dissolving into the sunshine,
Till she beheld him no more, though she followed far into the
forest.

Then, in those sweet, low tones, that seemed like a weird
incantation,

Told she the tale of the fair Lilinau, who was wooed by a
phantom, 1145

That, through the pines o'er her father's lodge, in the hush of
the twilight,

Breathed like the evening wind, and whispered love to the
maiden,

Till she followed his green and waving plume through the
forest,

And nevermore returned, nor was seen again by her people.

Silent with wonder and strange surprise, Evangeline listened 1150
To the soft flow of her magical words, till the region around
her

Seemed like enchanted ground, and her swarthy guest the
enchantress.

Slowly over the tops of the Ozark Mountains the moon rose,
Lighting the little tent, and with a mysterious splendour
Touching the sombre leaves, and embracing and filling the
woodland. 1155

With a delicious sound the brook rushed by, and the branches
Swayed and sighed overhead in scarcely audible whispers.
Filled with the thoughts of love was Evangeline's heart, but a
secret,

Subtile sense crept in of pain and indefinite terror,
As the cold, poisonous snake creeps into the nest of the
swallow. 1160

It was no earthly fear. A breath from the region of spirits
Seemed to float in the air of night ; and she felt for a moment

That, like the Indian maid, she, too, was pursuing a phantom.
With this thought she slept, and the fear and the phantom had
vanished.

Early upon the morrow the march was resumed, and the
Shawnee 1165

Said, as they journeyed along,—“ On the western slope of these
mountains

Dwells in his little village the Black Robe chief of the Mission.
Much he teaches the people, and tells them of Mary and Jesus ;
Loud laugh their hearts with joy, and weep with pain, as they
hear him.”

Then, with a sudden and secret emotion, Evangeline an-
swered, 1170

“ Let us go to the Mission, for there good tidings await us ! ”
Thither they turned their steeds ; and behind a spur of the
mountains,

Just as the sun went down, they heard a murmur of voices,
And in a meadow green and broad, by the bank of a river,
Saw the tents of the Christians, the tents of the Jesuit
Mission. 1175

Under a towering oak, that stood in the midst of the village,
Knelt the Black Robe chief with his children. A crucifix
fastened

High on the trunk of the tree, and overshadowed by grapevines,
Looked with its agonized face on the multitude kneeling be-
neath it.

This was their rural chapel. Aloft, through the intricate
arches 1180

Of its aerial roof, arose the chant of their vespers,
Mingling its notes with the soft susurrus and sighs of the
branches.

Silent, with heads uncovered, the travellers, nearer approaching,
Knelt on the swarded floor, and joined in the evening devotions.

But when the service was done, and the benediction had
fallen 1185

Forth from the hands of the priest, like seed from the hands
of the sower,

Slowly the reverend man advanced to the strangers, and bade
them

Welcome; and when they replied, he smiled with benignant
expression,

Hearing the homelike sounds of his mother-tongue in the
forest,

And, with words of kindness, conducted them into his wig-
wam. 1190

There upon mats and skins they reposed, and on cakes of the
maize-ear

Feasted, and slaked their thirst from the water-gourd of the
teacher.

Soon was their story told; and the priest with solemnity
answered:—

“Not six suns have risen and set since Gabriel, seated
On this mat by my side, where now the maiden reposes, 1195
Told me this same sad tale; then arose and continued his
journey!”

Soft was the voice of the priest, and he spake with an accent
of kindness;

But on Evangeline's heart fell his words as in winter the snow-
flakes

Fall into some lone nest from which the birds have departed.

“Far to the north he has gone,” continued the priest; “but in
autumn, 1200

When the chase is done, will return again to the Mission.”

Then Evangeline said, and her voice was meek and submissive,

“Let me remain with thee, for my soul is sad and afflicted.”

So seemed it wise and well unto all; and betimes on the morrow,

Mounting his Mexican steed, with his Indian guides and companions, 1205
Homeward Basil returned, and Evangeline stayed at the Mission.

Slowly, slowly, slowly the days succeeded each other,—
Days and weeks and months; and the fields of maize that were springing

Green from the ground when a stranger she came, now waving about her,

Lifted their slender shafts, with leaves interlacing, and forming 1210

Cloisters for medicant crows and granaries pillaged by squirrels.
Then in the golden weather the maize was husked, and the maidens

Blushed at each blood-red ear, for that betokened a lover,
But at the crooked laughed, and called it a thief in the corn-field.

Even the blood-red ear to Evangeline brought not her lover. 1215
"Patience!" the priest would say; "have faith, and the prayer will be answered !

Look at this vigorous plant that lifts its head from the meadow,
See how its leaves are turned to the north, as true as the magnet ;

It is the compass-flower, that the finger of God has planted
Here in the houseless wild, to direct the traveller's journey 1220
Over the sea-like, pathless, limitless waste of the desert.

Such in the soul of man is faith. The blossoms of passion,
Gay and luxuriant flowers, are brighter and fuller of fragrance,
But they beguile us, and lead us astray, and their odor is deadly.
Only this humble plant can guide us here, and hereafter 1225
Crown us with asphodel flowers, that are wet with the dews of nepenthe."

So came the autumn, and passed, and the winter,—yet
Gabriel came not ;
Blossomed the opening spring, and the notes of the robin and
bluebird

Sounded sweet upon wold and in wood, yet Gabriel came not.
But on the breath of the summer winds a rumor was wafted 1230
Sweeter than song of bird, or hue or odor of blossom.

Far to the north and east, it said, in the Michigan forests,
Gabriel had his lodge by the banks of the Saginaw River.
And, with returning guides, that sought the lakes of St.
Lawrence,

Saying a sad farewell, Evangeline went from the Mission. 1235
When over weary ways, by long and perilous marches,
She had attained at length the depths of the Michigan forests,
Found she the hunter's lodge deserted and fallen to ruin !

Thus did the long sad years glide on, and in seasons and
places

Divers and distant far was seen the wandering maiden ;— 1240
Now in the Tents of Grace of the meek Moravian Missions,
Now in the noisy camps and the battle-fields of the army,
Now in secluded hamlets, in towns and populous cities.
Like a phantom she came, and passed away unremembered.
Fair was she and young, when in hope began the long jour-
ney ; 1245

Faded was she and old, when in disappointment it ended.
Each succeeding year stole something away from her beauty,
Leaving behind it, broader and deeper, the gloom and the
shadow.

Then there appeared and spread faint streaks of gray o'er her
forehead,

Dawn of another life, that broke o'er her earthly horizon, 1250
As in the eastern sky the first faint streaks of the morning.

V.

In that delightful land which is washed by the Delaware's
waters,
Guarding in sylvan shades the name of Penn the apostle,
Stands on the banks of the beautiful stream the city he founded.
There all the air is balm, and the peach is the emblem of
beauty, 1255
And the streets still reëcho the names of the trees of the forest,
As if they fain would appease the Dryads whose haunts they
molested.
There from the troubled sea had Evangeline landed, an exile,
Finding among the children of Penn a home and a country.
There old René Leblanc had died; and when he departed, 1260
Saw at his side only one of all his hundred descendants.
Something at least there was in the friendly streets of the
city,
Something that spake to her heart, and made her no longer a
stranger ;
And her ear was pleased with the Thee and Thou of the
Quakers,
For it recalled the past, the old Acadian country, 1265
Where all men were equal, and all were brothers and sisters.
So, when the fruitless search, the disappointed endeavour,
Ended, to recommence no more upon earth, uncomplaining,
Thither, as leaves to the light, were turned her thoughts and
her footsteps.
As from a mountain's top the rainy mists of the morning 1270
Roll away, and afar we behold the landscape below us,
Sun-illuminated, with shining rivers and cities and hamlets,
So fell the mists from her mind, and she saw the world far
below her,
Dark no longer, but all illumined with love ; and the pathway
Which she had climbed so far, lying smooth and fair in the
distance. 1275

Gabriel was not forgotten. Within her heart was his image,
Clothed in the beauty of love and youth, as last she beheld
him,

Only more beautiful made by his deathlike silence and absence.
Into her thoughts of him time entered not, for it was not.

Over him years had no power; he was not changed, but
transfigured; 1280

He had become to her heart as one who is dead, and not
absent;

Patience and abnegation of self, and devotion to others,
This was the lesson a life of trial and sorrow had taught her.
So was her love diffused, but, like to some odorous spices,
Suffered no waste nor loss, though filling the air with aroma. 1285

Other hope had she none, nor wish in life, but to follow
Meekly with reverent steps, the sacred feet of her Saviour.
Thus many years she lived as a Sister of Mercy; frequenting
Lonely and wretched roofs in the crowded lanes of the city,
Where distress and want concealed themselves from the sun-
light, 1290

Where disease and sorrow in garrets languished neglected.
Night after night when the world was asleep, as the watchman
repeated

Loud, through the gusty streets, that all was well in the city,
High at some lonely window he saw the light of her taper.

Day after day, in the gray of the dawn, as slow through the
suburbs 1295

Plodded the German farmer, with flowers and fruits for the
market,

Met he that meek, pale face, returning home from its watch-
ings.

Then it came to pass that a pestilence fell on the city,
Presaged by wondrous signs, and mostly by flocks of wild
pigeons,

Darkening the sun in their flight, with naught in their craws
but an acorn. 1300

And, as the tides of the sea arise in the month of September,
Flooding some silver stream, till it spreads to a lake in the
meadow,

So death flooded life, and, o'erflowing its natural margin,
Spread to a brackish lake the silver stream of existence.
Wealth had no power to bribe, nor beauty to charm, the
oppressor ; 1305

But all perished alike beneath the scourge of his anger ;—
Only, alas ! the poor, who had neither friends nor attendants,
Crept away to die in the almshouse, home of the homeless.
Then in the suburbs it stood, in the midst of meadows and
woodlands ;—

Now the city surrounds it ; but still, with its gateway and
wicket 1310

Meek, in the midst of splendor, its humble walls seem to echo
Softly the words of the Lord :—"The poor ye always have with
you."

Thither, by night and by day, came the Sister of Mercy. The
dying

Looked up into her face, and thought, indeed, to behold there
Gleams of celestial light encircle her forehead with splen-
der, 1315

Such as the artist paints o'er the brows of saints and apostles,
Or such as hangs by night o'er a city seen at a distance.

Unto their eyes it seemed the lamps of the city celestial,
Into whose shining gates erelong their spirits would enter.

Thus, on a Sabbath morn, through the streets, deserted and
silent, 1320

Wending her quiet way, she entered the door of the alms-
house.

Sweet on the summer air was the odor of flowers in the garden,

And she paused on her way to gather the fairest among them,
That the dying once more might rejoice in their fragrance and
beauty.

Then, as she mounted the stairs to the corridors, cooled by the
east-wind, 1325

Distant and soft on her ear fell the chimes from the belfry of
Christ Church,

While, intermingled with these, across the meadows were
wafted

Sounds of psalms, that were sung by the Swedes in their
church at Wicaco.

Soft as descending wings fell the calm of the hour on her
spirit;

Something within her said, "At length thy trials are
ended;" 1330

And, with light in her looks, she entered the chambers of sick-
ness.

Noiselessly moved about the assiduous, careful attendants,
Moistening the feverish lip, and the aching brow, and in silence
Closing the sightless eyes of the dead, and concealing their
faces,

Where on their pallets they lay, like drifts of snow by the
roadside, 1335

Many a languid head, upraised as Evangeline entered,

Turned on its pillow of pain to gaze while she passed, for her
presence

Fell on their hearts like a ray of the sun on the walls of a
prison.

And, as she looked around, she saw how Death, the consoler,
Laying his hand upon many a heart, had healed it forever. 1340

Many familiar forms had disappeared in the night time;

Vacant their places were, or filled already by strangers.

Suddenly, as if arrested by fear or a feeling of wonder,
Still she stood, with her colourless lips apart, while a shudder

Ran through her frame, and, forgotten, the flowerets dropped
from her fingers, 1348

And from her eyes and cheeks the light and bloom of the
morning.

Then there escaped from her lips a cry of such terrible anguish,
That the dying heard it, and started up from their pillows.

On the pallet before her was stretched the form of an old man.
Long, and thin, and gray were the locks that shaded his
temples; 1350

But, as he lay in the morning light, his face for a moment
Seemed to assume once more the forms of its earlier manhood;
So are wont to be changed the faces of those who are dying.
Hot and red on his lips still burned the flush of the fever,
As if life, like the Hebrew, with blood had besprinkled its
portals, 1355

That the Angel of Death might see the sign, and pass over.
Motionless, senseless, dying, he lay, and his spirit exhausted
Seemed to be sinking down through infinite depths in the
darkness,

Darkness of slumber and death, forever sinking and sinking.
Then through those realms of shade, in multiplied reverbera-
tions, 1360

Heard he that cry of pain, and through the hush that suc-
ceeded

Whispered a gentle voice, in accents tender and saint-like,
"Gabriel! O my beloved!" and died away into silence.

Then he beheld, in a dream, once more the home of his child-
hood;

Green Acadian meadows, with sylvan rivers among them, 1365
Village, and mountain, and woodlands; and, walking under
their shadow,

As in the days of her youth, Evangeline rose in his vision.
Tears came into his eyes; and as slowly he lifted his eyelids,
Vanished the vision away, but Evangeline knelt by his bedside.

Vainly he strove to whisper her name, for the accents un-
uttered

Died on his lips, and their motion revealed what his tongue
would have spoken.

Vainly he strove to rise; and Evangeline, kneeling beside him,
Kissed his dying lips, and laid his head on her bosom.

Sweet was the light of his eyes; but it suddenly sank into
darkness,

As when a lamp is blown out by a gust of wind at a case-
ment.

All was ended now, the hope, and the fear, and the sorrow,
All the aching of heart, the restless, unsatisfied longing,
All the dull, deep pain, and constant anguish of patience!
And, as she pressed once more the lifeless head to her bosom,
Meekly she bowed her own, and murmured, "Father, I thank
thee!"

Still stands the forest primeval; but far away from its
shadow,

Side by side, in their nameless graves, the lovers are sleeping.
Under the humble walls of the little Catholic churchyard,
In the heart of the city, they lie, unknown and unnoticed.
Daily the tides of life go ebbing and flowing beside them,
Thousands of throbbing hearts, where theirs are at rest and
forever,

Thousands of aching brains, where theirs no longer are busy,
Thousands of toiling hands, where theirs have ceased from
their labours,

Thousands of weary feet, where theirs have completed their
journey!

Still stands the forest primeval ; but under the shade of its
branches

1390

Dwells another race, with other customs and language.
Only along the shore of the mournful and misty Atlantic
Linger a few Acadian peasants, whose fathers from exile
Wandered back to their native land to die in its bosom.
In the fisherman's cot the wheel and the loom are still busy ; 1395
Maidens still wear their Norman caps and their kirtles of
homespun,
And by the evening fire repeat Evangeline's story,
While from its rocky caverns the deep-voiced, neighbouring
ocean
Speaks, and in accents disconsolate answers the wail of the
forest.



SELECTIONS FROM LONGFELLOW.

THE BUILDERS.

All are architects of Fate,
Working in these walls of Time ;
Some with massive deeds and great,
Some with ornaments of rhyme.

Nothing useless is, or low ;
Each thing in its place is best ;
And what seems but idle show
Strengthens and supports the rest. 5

For the structure that we raise,
Time is with materials filled ;
Our to-days and yesterdays
Are the blocks with which we build. 10

Truly shape and fashion these ;
Leave no yawning gaps between ;
Think not, because no man sees,
Such things will remain unseen. 15

In the elder days of Art,
Builders wrought with greatest care
Each minute and unseen part ;
For the Gods see everywhere. 20

Let us do our work as well,
Both the unseen and the seen ;
Make the house, where Gods may dwell,
Beautiful, entire, and clean.

Else our lives are incomplete, 25
 Standing in these walls of Time,
Broken stairways, where the feet
 Stumble as they seek to climb.

Build to-day, then, strong and sure,
 With a firm and ample base ; 30
And ascending and secure
 Shall to-morrow find its place.

Thus alone can we attain
 To those turrets, where the eye
Sees the world as one vast plain, 35
 And one boundless reach of sky.

THE LADDER OF SAINT AUGUSTINE.

Saint Augustine ! well hast thou said,
 That of our vices we can frame
A ladder, if we will but tread
 Beneath our feet each deed of shame !

All common things, each day's events, 5
 That with the hour begin and end,
Our pleasures and our discontents,
 Are rounds by which we may ascend.

The low desire, the base design,
 That makes another's virtues less ; 10
The revel of the ruddy wine,
 And all occasions of excess ;

The longing for ignoble things ;
 The strife for triumph more than truth ;

THE LADDER OF SAINT AUGUSTINE.

263

25

The hardening of the heart, that brings
Irreverence for the dreams of youth ; 15

30

All thoughts of ill ; all evil deeds,
That have their root in thoughts of ill ;
Whatever hinders or impedes
The action of the nobler will ;— 20

35

All these must first be trampled down
Beneath our feet, if we would gain
In the bright fields of fair renown
The right of eminent domain.

We have not wings, we cannot soar ; 25
But we have feet to scale and climb
By slow degrees, by more and more,
The cloudy summits of our time.

The mighty pyramids of stone
That wedge-like cleave the desert airs, 30
When nearer seen, and better known,
Are but gigantic flights of stairs.

5

The distant mountains, that uprear
Their solid bastions to the skies,
Are crossed by pathways, that appear 35
As we to higher levels rise.

10

The heights by great men reached and kept
Were not attained by sudden flight,
But they, while their companions slept,
Were toiling upward in the night. 40

Standing on what too long we bore
With shoulders bent and downcast eyes,
We may discern—unseen before—
A path to higher destinies,

Nor deem the irrevocable Past 45
As wholly wasted, wholly vain,
If, rising on its wrecks, at last
To something nobler we attain.

A PSALM OF LIFE.

WHAT THE HEART OF THE YOUNG MAN SAID TO THE PSALMIST.

Tell me not, in mournful numbers,
"Life is but an empty dream!"
For the soul is dead that slumbers,
And things are not what they seem.

Life is real! Life is earnest! 5
And the grave is not its goal;
"Dust thou art, to dust returnest,"
Was not spoken of the soul.

Not enjoyment, and not sorrow, 10
Is our destined end or way;
But to act, that each to-morrow
Find us farther than to-day.

Art is long, and Time is fleeting,
And our hearts, though stout and brave,
Still, like muffled drums, are beating 15
Funeral marches to the grave.

In the world's broad field of battle,
In the bivouac of Life,
Be not like dumb, driven cattle!
Be a hero in the strife! 20

45

Trust no Future, howe'er pleasant !
 Let the dead Past bury its dead !
 Act—act in the living Present !
 Heart within, and God o'erhead !

Lives of great men all remind us
 We can make our lives sublime,
 And, departing, leave behind us
 Footprints on the sands of time ;—

25

LMIST.

Footprints, that perhaps another,
 Sailing o'er life's solemn main,
 A forlorn and shipwrecked brother,
 Seeing, shall take heart again.

30

5

Let us, then, be up and doing,
 With a heart for any fate ;
 Still achieving, still pursuing,
 Learn to labour and to wait.

35

10

THE DAY IS DONE.

The day is done, and the darkness
 Falls from the wings of Night,
 As a feather is wafted downward
 From an eagle in his flight.

15

I see the lights of the village
 Gleam through the rain and the mist,
 And a feeling of sadness comes o'er me,
 That my soul cannot resist :

5

20

A feeling of sadness and longing,
 That is not akin to pain,

10

And resembles sorrow only
As the mist resembles the rain.

Come, read to me some poem,
Some simple and heartfelt lay,
That shall soothe this restless feeling, 15
And banish the thoughts of day.

Not from the grand old masters,
Not from the bards sublime,
Whose distant footsteps echo 20
Through the corridors of time.

For, like strains of martial music,
Their mighty thoughts suggest
Life's endless toil and endeavour ;
And to-night I long for rest.

Read from some humbler poet, 25
Whose songs gushed from his heart,
As showers from the clouds of summer,
Or tears from the eyelids start ;

Who, through long days of labour,
And nights devoid of ease, 30
Still heard in his soul the music
Of wonderful melodies.

Such songs have power to quiet
The restless pulse of care,
And come like the benediction 35
That follows after prayer.

Then read from the treasured volume
The poem of thy choice,
And end to the rhyme of the poet
The beauty of thy voice. 40

And the night shall be filled with music,
 And the cares that infest the day,
 Shall fold their tents, like the Arabs,
 And as silently steal away.

THE FIRE OF DRIFT-WOOD.

We sat within the farm-house old,
 Whose windows, looking o'er the bay,
 Gave to the sea-breeze, damp and cold,
 An easy entrance, night and day.

Not far away we saw the port,—
 The strange, old-fashioned, silent town,—
 The light-house, the dismantled fort,—
 The wooden houses, quaint and brown.

We sat and talked until the night,
 Descending, filled the little room ;
 Our faces faded from the sight,
 Our voices only broke the gloom.

We spake of many a vanished scene,
 Of what we once had thought and said,
 Of what had been, and might have been,
 And who was changed, and who was dead ;

And all that fills the hearts of friends,
 When first they feel, with secret pain,
 Their lives thenceforth have separate ends,
 And never can be one again ;

The first light swerving of the heart,
That words are powerless to express,
And leave it still unsaid in part,
Or say it in too great excess.

The very tones in which we spake 25
Had something strange, I could but mark ;
The leaves of memory seem to make
A mournful rustling in the dark.

Oft died the words upon our lips,
As suddenly, from out the fire 30
Built of the wreck of stranded ships,
The flames would leap and then expire.

And, as their splendour flashed and failed,
We thought of wrecks upon the main,—
Of ships dismasted, that were hailed 35
And sent no answer back again.

The windows, rattling in their frames,—
The ocean, roaring up the beach,—
The gusty blast,—the bickering flames,—
All mingled vaguely in our speech ; 40

Until they made themselves a part
Of fancies floating through the brain,—
The long-lost ventures of the heart,
That send no answers back again.

O flames that glowed ! O hearts that yearned ! 45
They were indeed too much akin,
The drift-wood fire without that burned,
The thoughts that burned and glowed within.

RESIGNATION.

There is no flock, however watched and tended,
 But one dead lamb is there !
 There is no fireside, howsoe'er defended,
 But has one vacant chair !

The air is full of farewells to the dying, 5
 And mournings for the dead ;
 The heart of Rachel, for her children crying,
 Will not be comforted !

Let us be patient ! These severe afflictions
 Not from the ground arise, 10
 But oftentimes celestial benedictions
 Assume this dark disguise.

We see but dimly through the mists and vapours ;
 Amid these earthly damps,
 What seem to us but sad, funereal tapers 15
 May be heaven's distant lamps.

There is no death ! What seems so is transition.
 This life of mortal breath
 Is but a suburb of the life elysian,
 Whose portal we call Death. 20

She is not dead,—the child of our affection,—
 But gone unto that school
 Where she no longer needs our poor protection,
 And Christ himself doth rule.

In that great cloister's stillness and seclusion, 25
 By guardian angels led,
 Safe from temptation, safe from sin's pollution,
 She lives, whom we call dead.

Day after day we think what she is doing
In those bright realms of air ; 30
Year after year her tender steps pursuing,
Behold her grown more fair.

Thus do we walk with her, and keep unbroken
The bond which nature gives,
Thinking that our remembrance, though unspoken, 35
May reach her where she lives.

Not as a child shall we again behold her ;
For when with raptures wild,
In our embraces we again enfold her,
She will not be a child ; 40

But a fair maiden, in her Father's mansion,
Clothed with celestial grace ;
And beautiful with all the soul's expansion
Shall we behold her face.

And though at times, impetuous with emotion 45
And anguish long suppressed,
The swelling heart heaves moaning like the ocean,
That cannot be at rest,—

We will be patient, and assuage the feeling
We may not wholly stay ; 50
By silence sanctifying, not concealing,
The grief that must have way.

THE OLD CLOCK ON THE STAIRS.

Somewhat back from the village street
Stands the old-fashioned country-seat.

Across its antique portico
Tall poplar-trees their shadows throw ;
And from its station in the hall

An ancient timepiece says to all,—

“Forever—never !

Never—forever !”

Half-way up the stairs it stands,
And points and beckons with its hands

From its case of massive oak,
Like a monk, who, under his cloak,
Crosses himself, and sighs, alas !

With sorrowful voice to all who pass,—

“Forever—never !

Never—forever !”

By day its voice is low and light ;
But in the silent dead of night,
Distinct as a passing footstep's fall,
It echoes along the vacant hall,
Along the ceiling, along the floor,

And seems to say, at each chamber-door,—

“Forever—never !

Never—forever !”

Through days of sorrow and of mirth,
Through days of death and days of birth,
Through every swift vicissitude
Of changeful time, unchanged it has stood,
And as if, like God, it all things saw,

It calmly repeats those words of awe,—
“Forever—never!
Never—forever!” 30

In that mansion used to be
Free-hearted Hospitality;
His great fires up the chimney roared;
The stranger feasted at his board; 35
But, like the skeleton at the feast,
That warning timepiece never ceased,—
“Forever—never!
Never—forever!” 40

There groups of merry children played,
There youths and maidens dreaming strayed;
O precious hours! O golden prime,
And affluence of love and time!
Even as a miser counts his gold, 45
Those hours the ancient timepiece told,—
“Forever—never!
Never—forever!”

From that chamber, clothed in white,
The bride came forth on her wedding night; 50
There, in that silent room below,
The dead lay in his shroud of snow;
And in the hush that followed the prayer,
Was heard the old clock on the stair,—
“Forever—never! 55
Never—forever!”

All are scattered now and fled,
Some are married, some are dead;
And when I ask, with throbs of pain,
“Ah! when shall they all meet again?” 60

30 As in the days long since gone by,
 The ancient timepiece makes reply,—
 "Forever—never!
 Never—forever!"

35 Never here, forever there,
 Where all parting, pain, and care,
 And death, and time shall disappear,—
 Forever there, but never here!

65

The horologe of Eternity
 Sayeth this incessantly,—

70

40 "Forever—never!
 Never—forever!"



45 A GLEAM OF SUNSHINE.

This is the place. Stand still, my steed,
 Let me review the scene,
 And summon from the shadowy Past
 The forms that once have been.

50 The Past and Present here unite
 Beneath Time's flowing tide,
 Like footprints hidden by a brook,
 But seen on either side.

5

55 Here runs the highway to the town;
 There the green lane descends,
 Through which I walked to church with thee,
 O gentlest of my friends!

10

60 The shadow of the linden-trees
 Lay moving on the grass;

Between them and the moving boughs, 15
A shadow, thou didst pass.

Thy dress was like the lilies,
And thy heart as pure as they :
One of God's holy messengers
Did walk with me that day. 20

I saw the branches of the trees
Bend down thy touch to meet,
The clover-blossoms in the grass
Rise up to kiss thy feet.

"Sleep, sleep to-day, tormenting cares, 25
Of earth and folly born!"
Solemnly sang the village choir
On that sweet Sabbath morn.

Through the closed blinds the golden sun
Poured in a dusty beam, 30
Like the celestial ladder seen
By Jacob in his dream.

And ever and anon, the wind,
Sweet-scented with the hay,
Turned o'er the hymn-book's fluttering leaves 35
That on the window lay.

Long was the good man's sermon,
Yet it seemed not so to me ;
For he spake of Ruth the beautiful,
And still I thought of thee. 40

Long was the prayer he uttered,
Yet it seemed not so to me ;
For in my heart I prayed with him,
And still I thought of thee.

THE WARDEN OF THE CINQUE PORTS.

275

15

But now, alas! the place seems changed ;
 Thou art no longer here :
 Part of the sunshine of the scene
 With thee did disappear. 45

20

Though thoughts, deep-rooted in my heart,
 Like pine-trees dark and high,
 Subdue the light of noon, and breathe 50
 A low and ceaseless sigh ;

25

This memory brightens o'er the past,
 As when the sun, concealed
 Behind some cloud that near us hangs,
 Shines on a distant field. 55

30

THE WARDEN OF THE CINQUE PORTS.

35

A mist was driving down the British Channel,
 The day was just begun,
 And through the window-panes, on floor and panel,
 Streamed the red autumn sun.

40

It glanced on flowing flag and rippling pennon,
 And the white sails of ships ;
 And, from the frowning rampart, the black cannon,
 Hailed it with feverish lips. 5

Sandwich and Romney, Hastings, Hithe and Dover
 Were all alert that day,
 To see the French war-steamers speeding over,
 When the fog cleared away. 10

Sullen and silent, and like couchant lions,
 Their cannon, through the night,
Holding their breath, had watched, in grim defiance, 15
 The sea-coast opposite.

And now they roared at drum-beat from their stations
 On every citadel ;
Each answering each, with morning salutations,
 That all was well. 20

And down the coast, all taking up the burden,
 Replied the distant forts,
As if to summon from his sleep the Warden
 And Lord of the Cinque Ports.

Him shall no sunshine from the fields of azure, 25
 No drum-beat from the wall,
No morning gun from the black fort's embrasure,
 Awaken with its call!

No more, surveying with an eye impartial
 The long line of the coast, 30
Shall the gaunt figure of the old Field Marshal
 Be seen upon his post !

For in the night, unseen, a single warrior,
 In sombre harness mailed,
Dreaded of man, and surnamed the Destroyer, 35
 The rampart wall had scaled.

He passed into the chamber of the sleeper,
 The dark and silent room,
And as he entered, darker grew, and deeper,
 The silence and the gloom. 40

15 He did not pause to parley or dissemble,
But smote the Warden hoar ;
Ah ! what a blow ! that made all England tremble
And groan from shore to shore.

3
20 Meanwhile, without, the surly cannon waited,
The sun rose bright o'erhead ;
Nothing in Nature's aspect intimated
That a great man was dead.

45



NOTES ON LONGFELLOW.

EVANGELINE.

ORIGIN.

Hawthorne, the novelist, in his *American Note-Books*, writes: "H. L. C. (Rev. Mr. Conolly) heard from a French-Canadian a story of a young couple in Acadie. On their marriage day all the men of the province were summoned to assemble in the church to hear a proclamation. When assembled, they were all seized and shipped off to be distributed through New England—among them the new bridegroom. His bride set off in search of him—wandered about New England all her lifetime, and at last, when she was old, she found her bridegroom on his death bed. The shock was so great that it killed her likewise."

Hawthorne, despite Mr. Conolly's request, was disinclined to make this story the basis of a romance, and gladly resigned the tale to Longfellow, who at once saw in it splendid capabilities for a romantic idyll. Soon after the publication of *The Belfry of Bruges and Other Poems*, Longfellow began the poem, and in October, 1847, completed it.

In preparing for the work, the poet drew largely from Haliburton's *Historical Account of Nova Scotia*, with its frequent quotations from Abbé Raynal's sketches of life among the French settlers. He may have read also Winslow's narrative of the expedition under his command, which, as yet unprinted, was preserved among the archives of the Massachusetts Historical Society. Grand-Pré and the Mississippi

he did not visit. Descriptions in books and early Maine associations gave him his conceptions of Nova Scotia and Louisiana scenery.

VERSIFICATION.

Longfellow's genius was strongly assimilative rather than creative. From Goethe's *Hermann and Dorothea* came to him suggestions for the developing of his Acadian story, and from the same idyll he now chose his verse form. The hexameter had long been an English measure, but unpopular and in disuse. Though naturally more rapid in movement than the German hexameter, the rhythmic license of English verse forms, the monotony generally inseparable from long metrical cadences, the comparative insignificance of quantity as a factor in English metre together with the great dearth of natural spondees, made it a measure distasteful to poets. And yet in the hands of a great master of melody it has splendid capabilities. No verse form can better embody the epic simplicity of early races, none, with greater naturalness, directness and plainness of manner, reproduce Homeric thought. For free and unconstrained pictures of life and incidents in the great external world calling for no power of dramatic interpretation, it possesses a rapidity of movement and a natural dignity that repels the jaunty air and jog-trot of the ordinary ballad measure.

Longfellow was confirmed in his selection of this verse form by the striking effect of some hexameter lines published in *Blackwoods* as models for translators of Homer, by the success of his own previous experiment with the same metrical instrument in *The Seaside* and *The Cloud*, and subsequently to the completion of *The Seaside* by the success of Clough's *Long-Vacation Pastoral*. Though less classical regularity than Clough, with less force and passion, his verse reaches the ear of the reader with a milder, more tenderly elegant and certainly more

languid effect. At times, it is true, the poet errs ; the line becomes non-rhythmical, prosaic, lumbers along unlightened by shifting caesura or light spondee ; but on the whole no measure could lend itself more readily to a faithful interpretation of that harmony between thought and form, and that lingering melancholy which so strongly colours the whole poem. The movement to the reader at first seems peculiar—a gradual fall at the close of a verse precedes a sharp recovery at the beginning of the next verse, whilst throughout the first half of a line the thought seems to rise and swell in preparation for the gradual subsidence in the second half.

As distinctive features of the hexameter verse, developed and polished by Longfellow, note the epic simplicity, the directness and plainness of manner in ll. 175-197 ; 555-560 ; the lingering and, at times, rapid movement in ll. 160-170 ; 752-789 ; the sustained dignity of ll. 1-15 ; the rise and fall of cadence in 790-805 ; the tender elegance of ll. 806-814 ; 864-882, 890-910.

The historical circumstances connected with and forming the basis of the story of *Evangeline* may be briefly summarized.

In the year 1713 Acadia (now Nova Scotia) was ceded to Great Britain by France. The inhabitants—a few French settlers along the Annapolis Basin—were persuaded to take the oath of allegiance to the British Crown only on the condition of being regarded as “neutrals” in case of a war between the native land and their new mistress. During the long dispute after the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle (1748) over the northern boundary lines of Acadia the French settlers in Acadia were suspected of conniving with their fellow-Frenchmen and, in the acute stages of the dispute, of aiding with provisions and ammunition at the siege of Beau-Séjour. The English colonists determined to rid themselves of such dangerous neighbours. Governor Lawrence, with two English admirals, met in council (1755) and decided to forcibly remove the French settlers to various parts of the English colonial possessions. By proclamation the French were assembled in church at Grand-Pré, seized and deported—although without the ruthless cruelty with which tradition forced Longfellow to dress his story.

1. **forest primeval.** A forest as yet never disturbed by the axe.

3. **Druids of old.** Recalls the simplicity of the distant past.

4. Compare with Scott's picture of the Bard in the introduction to the *Lay of the Last Minstrel*.

5. An accurate impression of the shores of the Bay of Fundy.

8. Does this comparison in the guise of a startled deer suggest the tragedy of the story? Or does it refer merely to the buoyant, vigorous life of the settlers?

Compare *Tintern Abbey*, where Wordsworth speaks of his youth as the time

When like a roe
He bounded o'er the mountains, by the sides
Of the deep rivers, and the lonely streams,
Wherever nature led.

15. The refrain of the poem. Nature remains—man, with his joys, his sorrows, "his enduring affections," passes away.

16-19. Characteristic iterations in Longfellow's verse—even in his hexameters.

PART THE FIRST.

I.

21. Compare Goldsmith's *Traveller*:

Remote, unfriended, melancholy, slow,
Or by the lazy Scheldt, or wandering Po.

22. **Vast meadows.** Grand-Pré.

29. **Blomidon rose, etc.** See a sonnet by the Canadian poet, Roberts:

This is that black rock bastion, based in surge,
Pregnant with agate and with amethyst,
Whose top austere withdraws into the mist.
This is that ancient cape of tears and storm,
Whose towering front inviolable frowns
O'er vales Evangeline and love keep warm,

34. Henry II., III., IV. reigned between 1547 and 1610. Acadia was first settled early in the 17th century.

35, etc. Norman scenes, not altogether Acadian.

39. kirtles=jacket and skirt.

43. Compare with the Preacher in Goldsmith's *Deserted Village*.

49. *Angelus Domini* is the name given to the bell, rung morning, noon, and night, to summon the people to prayer, in commemoration of the visit of the angel to the Virgin. Introduced into France in the 16th century.

63. The similes met with in *Evangeline* have about them a strained air of simplicity and naturalness. They are subject to the limitations of all Longfellow's figures of speech. Examine carefully ll. 269, 329, 352, 444, 601, 671-2, 771, 781-2, 923, 1032-33, etc.

69-80. *Evangeline* is represented to us here in three distinct scenes, each scene in its order throwing more into relief her beauty of soul.

87-9. Borrowed from memories of travels in Europe.

96. What purpose is served by these frequent references to Biblical personages or incidents? Discuss the appropriateness of such references—ll. 153, 381, 486, 507, 597, 620, 821.

118. Longfellow certainly honoured the craft of the blacksmith by frequent references to the forge and anvil:

In *Nuremberg*:

As the weaver plied the shuttle, wove he too the mystic rhyme,
And the smith his iron measures hammered to the anvil's chime;
Thanking God, whose boundless wisdom makes the flowers of poesy bloom
In the forge's dust and cinders, in the tissues of the loom.

or in *To a Child*:

As great Pythagoras of yore,
Standing beside the blacksmith's door,
And hearing the hammers as they smote
The anvils with a different note,
Stole from the varying tones that hung
Vibrant on every iron tongue,
The secret of the sounding wire,
And formed the seven-chorded lyre.

or in *The Village Blacksmith*.

122. **plain-song** = an old ecclesiastical chant or recitation of the collects.

130. 1. Compare *The Village Blacksmith* :

And children coming home from school
Look in at the open door ;
They love to see the flaming forge
And hear the bellows roar,
And catch the burning sparks that fly
Like chaff from a threshing-floor.

133. Or, as the French saying expresses it, they were guests going in to the wedding.

137. In Pluquet's *Contes Populaires* we are told that the mother-swallow seeks on the shore of the ocean a certain small stone wherewith to remove blindness in her offspring.

144. Pluquet's proverb reads :

Si le soleil rit le jour Sainte-Eulalie
Il y aura pommes et cidre à folie.

(If the sun smiles on Saint Eulalie's day, there will be plenty of apples and cider enough.)—Saint Eulalie's day, February 12.

159. Our Indian Summer, All Saints Day being Nov. 1.

170. Herodotus states that Xexes was so enamoured of a beautiful plane-tree, met with in his Grecian expedition, that he dressed it as one might a woman and placed it under the care of a guardsman. Ælian adds that he adorned it with necklace and bracelets.

193. 4. Compare the cadence of the milkmaid's song in Tennyson's *Queen Mary*, III., 5.

231. Meaning of "jest" here?

240. Proclamation of Governor Lawrence, to be read by Col. Winslow, the officer in command.

249. Louisburg in Cape Breton, a strongly fortified French naval station, built early in the 18th century, was taken in 1745 by an expedition from Massachusetts under General Pepperell. Restored to France against the wishes of the New England colonists by the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, it was recaptured in 1757. Beau-Séjour was a French fort upon the neck of land connecting Acadia with the main-

land, which had just been captured by Winslow's forces, despite the secret assistance given by the French settlers. Port Royal (afterwards Annapolis Royal) at the outlet of the Annapolis River into the Bay of Fundy, was attacked by an expedition from New England in 1710, captured and retained as a fortified place.

252. Arms were surrendered as a condition of their being treated as "neutrals" in the wars with New France.

267. A "notary" is an officer authorized to attest contracts or writings of any kind.

275. King George's war, 1744-48, or Queen Anne's, 1702-1713.

280. The "Loup-garou," or were-wolf, is, according to a well-known French superstition, a man with power to turn himself into a wolf, which he does that he may devour children. Compare "bug-bear."

282. Possibly, says Pluquet, the appearance and motion of the white fleet ermine gave rise to this superstition.

284. On the Continent and among the English peasantry lingered long the belief that on Christmas Eve the cattle in the stables fall down on their knees in adoration of the infant Saviour, as was done—according to an old legend—in the stable at Bethlehem.

302. An old Florentine story which has served as the basis of an opera by Rossini (1817).

376. Premonitions of coming calamities.

IV.

385-398. This somewhat highly-coloured picture of Acadian life is drawn largely from Abbé Raynal's account of these early settlers.

413. *Tous les Bourgeois de Chartres* was a song written in Henry IV.'s time by Ducauroi :

*Vous connaissez Cybèle,
Qui sut fixer le Temps ;
On la disait fort belle,
Même dans ses vieux ans.*

CHORUS—

*Cette divinité, quoique déjà grand'mère
Avait les yeux doux, le teint frais,
Avait même certains attraits
Fermes comme la terre.*

Le Carillon de Dunkerque was a popular song to a tune played on the Dunkirk chimes :

Imprudent, téméraire
 A l'instant, je l'espère
 Dans mon juste courroux
 Tu vas tomber sous mes coups !
 —Je brave ta menace.
 —Etre moi ! Quelle audace !
 Avance donc, poltron !
 Tu trembles ? non, non, non.
 —J'étouffe de colère !
 —Je ris de ta colère.

432. This is substantially the address made by Winslow.

442, etc. This reminds one, in thought and form, of Virgil.

466. *tocsin's alarm* = an alarm bell. More distinct is the clock's stroke after the uproar of the alarm.

V.

554. The key-note of Evangeline's character.

570. Poetical exaggeration.

579. *leaguer*. German *Lager*. The camp of a besieged army.

605. *Benedicite*. Bless ye !

615. The Titans were giant deities in Greek mythology, who, in an effort to deprive Saturn of the sovereignty of heaven, were themselves subdued by the thunderbolts of Jupiter and driven into Tartarus. Briareus, the hundred-handed giant, was of the same parentage as the Titans, though not classed with them.

619. Colonel Winslow was commanded to deprive those who might escape of all shelter and support.

621. *gleeds*. Hot, burning coals. A Chaucerian word.

653. Many did subsequently return.

657. The tolling of the bell and the reading of the service book.

PART THE SECOND.

I.

675. The Mississippi.

707. *voyageur* = a river boatman.

713. St. Catherine, of Alexandria, was celebrated for her vows of virginity. Hence the saying "to braid St. Catherine's tresses" of one devoted to a single life.

720. Compare Tennyson :

I hold it truth, whate'er befall,
Tis better to have loved and lost,
Than never to have loved at all.

741. Beautiful River = Ohio, in the Iroquois dialect.

750. Louisiana though ceded by France in 1762, did not actually pass into the hands of Spain until 1769. Acadians attracted by the presence of a French population, settled along the river Mississippi, from the mouth about New Orleans, as far north as Baton Rouge and even Point Coupée, giving to one shore the name "Acadian coast." Many were sent by the authorities to form settlements in Attakapas and Opelousas.

755. *chutes* = rapid descents in a river.

758. *wimpling* = rippling.

764. *citron* = a species of lemon-tree.

766. *Bayou* = a channel leading from a river.

782. *mimosa* = the sensitive plant.

873. Longfellow, in testing by various experiments the fitness of the hexameter, was struck by the limitations of his pentameter verse in the description of the mocking-bird's song :

Upon a spray that overhung the stream,
The mocking-bird, awaking from his dream,
Poured such delicious music from his throat,
That all the air seemed listening to his note.
Plaintive at first the song began and slow ;
It breathed of sadness and of pain and woe ;
Then gathering all his notes, abroad he flung
The multitudinous music of his tongue ;
As after showers, a sudden gust again,
Upon the leaves shakes down the rattling rain.

878. **Bacchantes** = worshippers of the god **Bacchus**, who in Greek mythology presided over the vine and its fruits. Such devotees delighted in all manner of excesses, in song, in dance and revelry.

III.

889. **mystic mistletoe**. "Mystic," from Druidic associations.

970. **ci-devant** = former.

1001. Whence came the astonishment of Father Felician?

1025, etc. Nature's moods act and react upon Evangeline, as with sensitive, delicate, psychic power she felt the spirit in the universe about her.

1033. The Carthusians belong to an exceedingly strict monastic order, founded in the 12th century. Almost perpetual silence is one of the vows of the order.

1044. See *Daniel*, v., 25

1049. See l. 16.

IV.

1078. The exact situation of this "desert land" is very vaguely defined—in Wyoming or Arkansas.

1091. **amorphas**. A leguminous plant.

1095. **Ishmael's children**. Who?

1114. **Fata Morgana** = a sort of mirage occasionally seen in the Straits of Messina, and less frequently elsewhere. It consists in the appearance in the air over the sea of the objects which are on the neighbouring coasts. This mirage of terrestrial objects in the sky is quite common in the south-west of the United States.

1139. These stories the poet drew from the same source as his *Hiawatha* legends, viz.: Schoolcraft's *Algonic Researches*.

1182. **susurrus** = whisper or murmur.

1199. Compare Wordsworth's sonnet, *To a Distant Friend*.

1226. In early Greek poetry, meadows of asphodel (lily) were haunted by the shades of heroes. **Nepenthe** was a magic potion of the Homeric days, bringing forgetfulness of sorrow.

1241. A rendering of the Moravian Gnadenhütten.

1244. Compare l. 1163.

V.

1252. Hence the name of the state.

1253. Philadelphia, with its streets, Chestnut, Walnut, Locust, Spruce, Pine, etc.

1257. Dryads = Nymphs of the woods.

1298. The year 1793 brought a terrible plague of yellow fever to Philadelphia.

1308. almshouse. Longfellow said to a journalist in explaining the position of Philadelphia in his tale: "I was passing down Spruce street (in Philadelphia) one day towards my hotel after a walk, when my attention was attracted to a large building with beautiful trees about it inside of a high enclosure. I walked along until I came to the great gate and then stepped inside and looked carefully over the place. The charming picture of lawn, flower-beds and shade which it presented made an impression which has never left me, and when I came to write *Evangeline* I placed the final scene, the meeting between Evangeline and Gabriel, and the death at the poor-house, and the burial in an old Catholic grave-yard not far away, which I found by chance in another of my walks."

1328. This church still stands on the banks of the Delaware River, within the city limits.

1381. Opening refrain repeated. Nature is persistent, man, the individual, has gone.

1385. Mild pensiveness, so natural to Longfellow, runs throughout this final requiem.

1399. How completely has nature become oblivious of the sad memories of Evangeline.

THE BUILDERS—1846.

This poem in form and thought is but a sermon in verse. A simple text is given; in various ways this text is presented to the reader's mind, and the whole is concluded with an exhortation. Such lifeless material could arouse no spiritual

enthusiasm, could represent no poetic inspiration, and must find expression in non-descript metrical form, in prosaic diction, and in trite, if not confused, figurative language.

3, 4. Have we a contrast presented in ll. 3 and 4?

5, 6. Compare with the *Ladder of St. Augustine*.

17, 18. This probably refers to the completeness and faithfulness of Grecian art.

23, 4. Compare *Tintern Abbey*:

Thy mind
Shall be a mansion for all lovely forms ;
Thy memory be as a dwelling-place
For all sweet sounds and harmonies.

27, 8. Compare with the *Ladder of St. Augustine*.

THE LADDER OF ST. AUGUSTINE—1850.

The thought of this poem, as with all Longfellow's sermons in verse, is within the common experience of men. In the great economy of nature's moral forces, nothing is lost, nothing may return "empty to the void." Mighty influences may shape the soul of Coleridge's *Mariner*; but Wordsworth's Milton draws his heroic greatness from the common duties of common life. Evolution, that works amid the agents of the external world, shapes as well the growth of the spirit, and with Longfellow the soul's evolution means at first a blind, almost unconscious, survival from the petty cares of life. Growth brings clearer insight, the clouds roll away from the goal and evolution finally becomes conscious effort.

1. *St. Augustine*. One of the greatest of the early Christian fathers (354-430 A.L.). He has had a vast influence in shaping the religious thought of past ages.

2. of our vices, etc. In his sermon, *De Ascensione*, Augustine says: "De vitiis nostris scalam nobis facimus, si vitia ipsa calcamus."

3. Compare Tennyson's *In Memoriam*, I.:

I held it truth with him who sings
To one clear harp in divers tones,
That men may rise on stepping-stones
Of their dead selves to higher things.

5, etc. Compare ll. 12, 13, 14, Wordsworth's sonnet, *To London*, 1802.

16. Such irreverence, says Coleridge, is the basest egotism.

24. A legal phrase signifying sovereign ownership.

37. Is this the true conception of great men and their achievements?

41. Christian in the *Pilgrim's Progress* has his burdens rolled from his shoulders. Longfellow would have us share in the struggle to overthrow the world of sense.

THE PSALM OF LIFE.

It is not difficult to account for the extraordinary popularity of this poem. Written by an American for Americans in this modern industrial age, it echoes in a detached aphoristic way the underlying *motifs* of the average American life. The text of the psalm is effort, work, growth—good living and good working, and with a simple faith in the homely worth of his sermon the poet abandons all hope of poetic inspiration, descends among men into the prosaic world and in disconnected figures and lines encourages his fellow-workers.

The poem was written in Cambridge on a bright summer morning in July, 1838. "I kept it some time in manuscript," says Longfellow, "unwilling to show it to anyone, it being a voice from my inmost heart, at a time when I was rallying from depression." Before publishing it in the *Knickerbocker Magazine*, October, 1838, the poet read it to his college class after a lecture on Goethe. The title, though used

now exclusively for this poem, was originally, in the poet's mind, a generic one. He notes from time to time in his diary that he has written a psalm, a psalm of death, or another psalm of life. The psalmist was himself.

3. Spiritual lethargy is after all the greatest moral wrong. Compare Browning's *The Statue and the Bust*:

And the sin I impute to each frustrate ghost
Is the unlit lamp and the ungirt loin,
Though the end in sight is a vice, I say.

4. Our conception of the world and its problems is a measure of our own enlightenment. "We receive but what we give."

5. The moral of life is a never-ceasing struggle—with Longfellow, we cannot say, a cheerful struggle.

7. Compare Genesis, III., 19.

13. Point out the intended application of the first half of this aphorism from Hippocrates.

22. Compare St. Luke, IX., 60. A similar thought appears in the poet's *Hyperion*:

Look not mournfully into the Past! Wisely improve the Present. It is thine. Go forth to meet the shadowy Future without fear and with a manly heart.

23-24. Discuss the value of this matter-of-fact philosophy of life.

27-28. Is this the noblest of purposes? Compare *The Builders*, ll. 15, 16.

33-4. Compare with the spirit of Browning's *Prospect* or Crashaw's

Life that shall send
A challenge to its end
And when it comes, say, Welcome, friend.

THE DAY IS DONE.

Longfellow's songs, coloured as they often are by the spirit of Heine and Uhland, possess a more spontaneous, more

imaginative tone than such didactic lyrics as *The Builders*, *Resignation*, *Psalm of Life*, etc.

The Day is Done was written in 1844 as a poem to *The Waif*, a small volume published by Longfellow at Christmas of that year.

1-5. Longfellow frequently, too frequently perhaps, refers to the soothing influences of night, its calm, its voices of sorrow and joy, its stars, but these references lack the delicate, aerial touch of Shelley in :

Swiftly walk over the western wave,
 Spirit of night!
 Out of the misty eastern cave,
 Where all the long and lone daylight,
 Thou wovest dreams of joy and fear,
 Which make thee terrible and dear,
 Swift be thy flight!

7. A shade of sadness, due perhaps to German influences, tinges Longfellow's relations with nature and human life. Compare with Wordsworth.

25-44. Wordsworth's purpose as a poet was "to console the afflicted; to add sunshine to daylight by making the happy, happier; to teach the young and the gracious of every age to see, to think and feel, and therefore to become more actively and securely virtuous." And of Wordsworth it is said: "The more thoughtful of each generation will draw nearer and observe him more closely, will ascend his imaginative heights and sit under the shadow of his profound meditations, and in proportion as they do so, will become more noble and pure in heart." Discuss Longfellow's views of the restorative influences of the "humbler poet" in the light of these quotations.

THE FIRE OF DRIFTWOOD.

Longfellow's diary says:

"September 29th, 1846. A delicious drive with F. (his wife) through Malden and Lynn to Marblehead, to visit E. W. at the Devereux Farm by the sea-side. Drove across the beautiful sand; what a delicious scene! The ocean in the sunshine changing from the silvery hue of the

thin waves upon the beach, through the lighter and deeper green, to a rich purple in the horizon. We recalled the times past, and the days when we were at Nahant. The Devereux Farm is by the sea, some miles from Lynn. An old fashioned farm-house, with low rooms and narrow windows rattling in the sea breeze." From the drive sprang this poem.

13, etc. Compare with the manner and pervading tone of More's *Irish Melodies*.

17-24. Compare, in intensity of feeling, Clough's *As Ships Becalmed at Eve*.

RESIGNATION.

This poem, the first in the group, entitled *By the Fireside*, was written in 1848 after the death of his little daughter, Fanny. In the poet's diary, Nov. 12, he writes: "I feel very sad to-day. I miss very much my dear little Fanny. An inappeasable longing to see her comes over me at times which I can hardly control."

7. *Rachel*. See Jeremiah xxxi., 15; Matthew, ii., 18.

17. Compare *Psalms of Life*, ll. 7, 8.

19. *elysian*. Elysium was the Paradise of the Greek poets.

33, 4. Compare *The Education of Nature*. With Wordsworth, memory also "kept unbroken the bond which nature gives." Tennyson, *In Memoriam*, cxxx., sings of his dead friend:

Far off thou art, but ever nigh;
I have thee still, and I rejoice;
I prosper, circled with thy voice;
I shall not lose thee tho' I die.

43. Compare Tennyson, *In Memoriam*, cxviii.:

Trust that those we call the dead
Are breathers of an ampler day
For ever nobler ends.

51, 2. Compare Tennyson's *In Memoriam*, v.:

I sometimes hold it half a sin
To put in words the grief I feel,

THE OLD CLOCK ON THE STAIRS.

The house commemorated in this poem is the Gold House, now known as the Plunkett mansion in Pittsfield, Mass., the homestead of Mrs. Longfellow's maternal grandfather, whither the poet went after his marriage in the summer of 1843. The poem was not written, however, till November, 1845, when, under date of the 12th of the month, he wrote in his diary: "Began a poem on a clock with the words 'Forever, never,' as the burden, suggested by the words of Bridaine, the old French missionary, who said of eternity: *C'est une pendule dont le balancier dit et redit sans cesse ces deux mots seulement dans le silence des tombeaux,—Toujours, jamais! Jamais, toujours! Et pendant ces effrayables révolutions, un réprouvé s'écrie, 'Quelle heure est-il?' et la voix d'un autre misérable lui répond 'L'Eternité.'*"

1-5. Longfellow's scenic backgrounds are in harmony with the popular reflections arising from them. He cannot often see into the very life of his environment, nor can he portray the spiritual significance of any "setting." As a study in "backgrounds" compare with *Ozymandias*, quoted elsewhere.

7, 8. A string from Poe's harp.

17-22. Recalls More's *melodies*.

37. Origin of this figure?

41, etc. The shifting scenes here remind one of *The Hanging of the Crane*.

65, etc. Longfellow finds compensation for the sadness of this life in the life to come; Coleridge draws consolation from the permanence of thought and mind in this life and its continuance hereafter, while Wordsworth, rejoicing in the rounding of his manhood hereafter, seeks comfort in natural and earthly joys.

69. *horologe*=a time-piece.

A GLEAM OF SUNSHINE.

In the poet's diary, Aug. 31, 1846, we find the following entry: "In the afternoon a delicious drive with F. and C. through Brookline, by the church and 'the green lane' and homeward through a lovelier lane, with barberries and wild vines clustering over the old stone walls." In this drive lay the suggestion of the poem.

THE WARDEN OF THE CINQUE PORTS.

This poem was written in Oct. 1852, and published in *Putnam's Magazine*, January, 1853. The warden was the Duke of Wellington, who died in September, 1852.

A clear conception of the characteristic limitations of Longfellow's poetic genius might be derived from a comparison of this poem with Tennyson's ode upon the same subject. The most cursory reading impresses one with the fact that in plan Tennyson's poem is more spontaneously developed and more natural. In it there is no elaborated framework or setting, but a background of forms almost hidden from view by a weight and richness of reflection. In lieu of the finished climaxes and, in some way, picturesque climaxes of Longfellow, we have a constant ebb and flow of strong emotion. The English poet is hopeful in his solution of the mystery of death. Life in Wellington meant a noble fidelity to truth and duty, and death meant, not utter loss, but growth :

Nothing can bereave him
Of the force he made his own
Being here, and we believe him
Something far advanced in State,
And that he wears a truer crown
Than any wreath that man can weave him.

The world of man and the world of nature sympathize deeply in his loss, and yet find solace and comfort in his departure. Longfellow on the other hand draws but one lesson from his death, and that a stern one. In her decrees, Nature is inexorable. She continues her course untouched by man's joys or sorrows :

Nothing in nature's aspect intimated
That a great man was dead.

Again Tennyson—perhaps for particular reasons in this case—is more sincere and consequently more vigorous. Longfellow

looks in a mild, pensive and general way upon the death of a great man. Tennyson, an Englishman and a patriot, is stirred to the heart by the death of the mightiest of Englishmen.

Compare the sweep of :

O fall'n at length that tower of strength
Which stood foursquare to all the winds of heaven,

with ll. 31-32 of Longfellow's poem, or both in conception and cadence, compare

Who is he that cometh, like an honour'd guest,
With banner and with music, with soldier and with priest,
With a nation weeping, and breaking on my rest ?
Mighty seaman, this is he
Was great by land as thou by sea.

with the best lines in Longfellow's poem, say ll. 37-40, 45-8.

Cinque Ports are the five maritime ports of England lying opposite the coast of France (l. 9). William the Conqueror placed these seaports under the special jurisdiction of a warden with civil, military and naval authority. The appointment, purely honorary since the Stuart days, was abolished upon the death of the Duke of Wellington.

5. Enthusiastic commentators have noted the precision and picturesqueness of Longfellow's diction. Criticize such an estimate of his manner by references to epithets like "rippling" (5), "feverish" (8), "impartial" (29).

12. An invention of the poet. Why appropriate?

13. **couchant lions.** Heraldic term—lying down with head upraised.



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